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John Francis Barnett

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MUSICAL REMINISCENCES AND IMPRESSIONS

BY
JOHN FRANCIS BARNETT

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PREFACE

WHEN I sat down to write my reminiscences, I did so with some misgivings as to whether I had materials of sufficient interest at my disposal. I had not, however, written many pages, before I began to live again in the past. Incidents which I had almost forgotten came before me as vividly as if they had occurred but yesterday. I saw, in imagination, the faces and figures of musicians, the lives and doings of whom the younger generations read as matters of musical history. For me, whilst penning my recollections, these musicians of the past were just as present as they were years ago when I was holding converse with them, or when I saw them at the festival or concert in which they were taking part. Some of these celebrities still live in their works, and are thus in a manner present amongst us; but the great singers and the world-famed executants I have written about are, for the most part, but a name to those who have not had the privilege, as I had, of hearing them. The voice of many a celebrated singer of bygone days still rings in my ears, although now for ever mute. I

seem again to hear the silvery tones of some great violinist, of whom the only relic that remains to us is the violin he loved so well. Or I am excited once more, when I listen in imagination to the brilliant feats of *bravura*-playing of some grand pianist whose agile fingers touched their last chord so long ago. In not a few cases I have ventured to record the impression produced upon me by musical works and their exponents; and as I have, during the earlier part of my life, lived in times when the tastes in such matters were, to a great extent, at variance with those of the present age, I am thus able to compare notes as to the past and present state of musical feeling in this country. If, in these reminiscences, I have sometimes been able to throw light on bygone events in the musical world, or to picture others, with which I have been personally connected, in such a manner as to awaken interest in those who love the art of music, I shall feel amply rewarded for the time and trouble I have given to writing them, even if the reproduction is faint in effect, or the words in which I have endeavoured to clothe my descriptions fall short of what my memory has set before me.

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INTRODUCTION

WE have, as a rule, but little knowledge of the history of our forefathers who lived two or three generations ago. Their lives are, as it were, surrounded by a halo of mystery. It is therefore only natural for our curiosity to be roused, should we perchance hear anything that would throw light upon their mode of life, or that would tell us what their occupations were, whether they devoted themselves to art, or to science, or to the busy routine of commerce.

Any information of this kind, in regard to my predecessors, cannot, of course, be included in my reminiscences; but perhaps I may be pardoned if I record a few details concerning my family history that were told to me by my father and mother. These details are very fragmentary, but such as they are I will repeat them.

My grandfather on my father's side, who was a diamond merchant, was by birth a Prussian, and his wife a Hungarian. His name was Bernhart Beer, but on his settling in England he changed his sur-

name to Barnett, which the family has ever since retained.

It is said, on good authority, that he was related to Meyerbeer. This does not seem improbable, as that composer's family name was, likewise, originally Beer, the Meyer having been subsequently prefixed to it.

My grandfather had three sons: John, the composer of the "Mountain Sylph"; the second son being Joseph Alfred, who was my father; and another son, Zaraeh, who was a dramatic writer, and who wrote some of the libretti of my uncle John's operas.

It appears that my grandfather lost his wife whilst my father was a child, and that in consequence of this bereavement he seemed to lose his interest in commercial matters, and therefore found it necessary to take in a partner, who, managing the business badly, brought about the failure of the concern.

This caused my grandfather's income to become so reduced that he was unable to give my father a good musical education; otherwise, I am of opinion that my father would have been a composer who would have made his mark, for he had unmistakable talent, but unfortunately no proper cultivation.

On my mother's side I am able to trace two branches of her progenitors.

Her grandfather on her father's side was the inventor of a system of printing on calico, of the name of Cornelius Hudson, who had large works at Old Ford, near Bow; a water-colour drawing of his manufactory, painted by William Varley, a brother of the celebrated artist, John Varley, being in our possession.

From all I have heard, it is evident that Cornelius Hudson was a very ingenious mechanician. For his amusement he made a chamber-organ, every detail being his own workmanship. He likewise constructed an orrery. Both these specimens of ingenuity were, unfortunately, sold after his death, so that his descendants, myself among the number, never had an opportunity of seeing them. But I am glad to say that we have a beautiful miniature of him executed by one of his sons, William Hudson, who was my grandfather, and who was a miniature-painter by profession.

This William Hudson married a daughter of a widow lady, Mrs. Maltby, who was the owner of a financial newspaper called "The Price Current," which at one time had a large sale, and was probably the first financial newspaper ever published.

I have at home a very fine portrait, life size, of this Mrs. Maltby, my great-grandmother, which Sir John Tenniel, when he was once at my house, admired greatly. This portrait is by a Royal

Academician of the period. I may add that some years ago I was much interested in coming across a diary of my great-grandmother, in which she speaks about Mr. Hudson, my grandfather, visiting her house at the time he was paying his addresses to her daughter. Amongst the relics of the past, that I likewise found, was an antique volume of the "Arabian Nights,"[1] on the title-page of which is written in faded ink, "Priscilla Hudson, the gift of her aunt Lady Bannerman." This Priscilla Hudson was my mother's youngest sister, so that it would appear that my grandmother was connected by marriage with the Bannerman family.

Having in a few words recounted all I have heard narrated to me about some of my relatives of the remote past, I will, without further delay, tell my own story, and, although I cannot promise anything in the way of exciting incidents, I venture to hope that my reminiscences may not be without value, as I have in the course of my life been fortunate in meeting with many a celebrity of bygone musical times, and am thus enabled to speak about them and to recount not a few incidents of interest in connexion with them.

[1] Published in 1798 at Montrose, by Buchanan.

CHAPTER I

BOYHOOD—KING'S SCHOLAR

MY earliest recollections are principally associated with my school days and my practising on an old square piano of D'Almaine; very much the same style of instrument, in outward appearance, as those seen in pictures of Mozart as a child, seated on a high stool, playing some infantine composition.

I cannot say that in those days I always enjoyed practising, and I expect I must have frequently tried the patience of my mother who taught me.

She had been a pupil of Sterndale Bennett, and no doubt I owe much to the early musical training I received from her.

I can quite distinctly recollect learning my first tune. I was then seven years old. It seems strange that whilst I was being initiated into the mysteries of crochets and quavers, and of lines and spaces, Mendelssohn, Schumann and Chopin were still living, and even adding new art treasures

to those that they had already produced. For when I first learnt to revere these names, they had already passed beyond the threshold of this limited sphere, and were reckoned among the great ones of the past.

After I had overcome the initial difficulties of the piano, and was able to play fairly well, my musical studies were almost exclusively restricted to classical music; I have sometimes thought almost too much so. Beethoven's Sonata in F minor, op. 2, was the first sonata I learnt, and I can even now recollect the intense pleasure studying it gave me.

Anything light in music seemed to me utterly commonplace, but sometimes I found others not always sharing my opinion; much to my disappointment. Thus I recollect on one occasion, when I played a sonata to a French lady and gentleman, they remarked, "that it was a pity my playing was thrown away on such dry music." I am afraid that their opinion is even now shared by a great many, for who would think of playing a Beethoven sonata at a musical "At Home"?

It seems now curious to me that during my boyhood my tastes were not entirely centred in music. Yet such was actually the case. In fact, I believe I was fonder of scientific studies, for I can recollect making myself an electrical machine,

as well as getting together a small chemical laboratory. Then I had quite a collection of scientific works, which I used to study assiduously.

My father was so struck with my love for science, that at one time he seriously thought of bringing me up as an engineer or analytical chemist, and I was for that reason introduced to Dr. Bachoffner, at that time the lecturer at the Polytechnic Institution of London, whose lectures on chemistry and electricity gave me even keener pleasure than music itself.

I have often thought since, that probably I had more love than actual talent for those subjects. Whether that was the case or not, it is certain that, although for a time science competed with music as to my future walk in life, in the end music gained the day.

This was brought about by my being introduced at the age of eleven to Dr. Wylde, who was at that time a professor at the Royal Academy of Music. He heard me play, and thought so well of my talent, that he volunteered to give me instruction free of charge; and his liberal offer being accepted by my father, my fate was decided upon, and I began to study with a view of becoming a musician.

I can well recollect with how much pleasure I looked forward to my lessons; I enjoyed, too,

the walk through the fields that led from the Grove, Kentish Town, where I lived, to the top of Highgate Archway, for it was near there that Dr. Wylde dwelt. Alas! those undulating fields have long since disappeared, and in their place has arisen a suburb obliterating all traces of the pastoral landscape I loved so well.

I may here incidentally mention that, even as a child, I always had a great love for the beauties of nature. Perhaps this love of the picturesque may have been fostered in early childhood by the charming surroundings of Roslyn Castle, where I stayed some weeks when I was between the ages of seven and eight.

At that time my grandmother, Mrs. Hudson, lived in a part of the castle, which was then let as a residence, and my mother had taken me there on a visit.

I have a vivid recollection of the wild glen with its waterfall at the foot of the castle, and I can, in imagination, see myself looking with eyes of wonderment at the foaming cascade and the over-hanging wood, and then resting myself upon a ledge of rock that chance had formed into a rustic seat, and which nature had upholstered with thick moss, even softer than velvet. The castle itself, with its gloomy dungeons, conjured up mysterious feelings within me. And as children at the age

I was then, are very imaginative, it would not have taken much to persuade me that it was haunted by the ghosts of the knights of old who had dwelt there, or of the prisoners who had pined away in captivity.

The deep impression made upon me by Roslyn Castle has never faded from my memory, despite the number of years that have elapsed since I stayed there as a little child. I still feel as if, should I ever revisit it, I could find my way about the weird ins and outs of the ruins as easily as if I had been living there ever since.

To resume from where I broke off, every week I regularly took my walk to Highgate Archway for my lessons, so that under Dr. Wylde's guidance I made such rapid progress, that when I arrived at the age of thirteen, he decided upon my trying for the King's Scholarship of the Royal Academy of Music; at that time the only scholarship in existence in England for music students.

This gave an incentive to my working harder at my pianoforte playing. The pieces I prepared for the scholarship examination were Nos. 1 and 4 from Mendelssohn's Seven Characteristic Pieces. I also wrote for it a very juvenile Sonata; which, of course, my parents thought to be a wonderful feat for a boy to accomplish.

This competition seemed a great event in my

life; and I well recollect how excited I felt as I made my way to Tenterden Street on the morning of the competition. My father accompanied me, and we were ushered into the waiting-room of the Academy, which at that time was at the left-hand side of the hall, and where several other competitors with their friends or relations were assembled. Whilst I was waiting my turn, a gentleman, whose son was likewise competing, entered into conversation with my father, and, pointing to me where I was seated talking to a school companion of mine, who was in the running, said to my father: "I feel sure that lad over there will gain the scholarship, he looks so musical. I should like, if possible, to know his name, as I intend to look in the paper to see if my opinion is correct." When he learnt my name from my father, he seemed very interested at his having, by chance, made his inquiry as to my identity of the very best authority possible.

When my turn came for being examined, I cannot say that I felt entirely free from nervousness, but I pulled myself together and determined to do my best.

Seated around a long table were the board of professors, at the head of which was Cipriani Potter, the Principal of the Academy. Although a man of small proportions, his appearance was,

nevertheless, calculated to inspire a certain amount of awe in the mind of a juvenile. This was no doubt due to the peculiarly bushy eyebrows he had, which gave a certain degree of fierceness to his face. Amongst other professors present were, I believe, Sterndale Bennett, Charles Lucas, the father of the late Stanley Lucas, William Dorrell, and other musicians of reputation.

I first handed in my Sonata; then I sat at the piano and played the Mendelssohn pieces from memory, which, fortunately, went better than they had ever done before. After I had read a short piece at sight, the examiners asked me to extemporize, and as I had always had a facility for this kind of performance, I believe I made a good impression upon them; anyhow, I endeavoured, whilst I was improvising, to throw my whole soul into my playing. I feel certain that my extemporizing, more than anything else, decided the scholarship in my favour.

When I entered upon my studies at the Royal Academy of Music, I felt how fortunate I was in having been admitted by competition to an institution that had done so much for music, and which had given to the world such musicians as Sterndale Bennett, Miss Dolby, and George Macfarren.

As a King's scholar of the Academy, whenever

I appeared in public, I had to wear a uniform, the principal feature of which was a goodly row of gold buttons on my jacket, each of which had on it the Royal Coat of Arms, and of which I was not a little proud.

CHAPTER II

A VOCAL INTERLUDE—MY DÉBUT—THE ORGAN LOFT

IT might be assumed from what I have so far written about my boyhood, that my musical tastes were cultivated solely in the direction of instrumental music; nevertheless, I had some opportunities of acquiring a love for vocal music as well. These were, it is true, very desultory; still they served to introduce me to that department of musical art which so appeals to the masses. Had not my father been a professor of singing, I should, in those earlier years of my life, have heard little of the art to which he had devoted himself. Not a few of my father's pupils received their lessons at his house; amongst these being a Mr. Charles Bingley, who had a beautiful and sonorous bass voice. He ultimately became a popular operatic singer, under the *nom de plume* of Charles Durand, and having private means, he established an operatic company which attained great and deserved success in the provinces.

While studying singing under my father he came for his lessons in the evenings and frequently brought his wife with him, when they sometimes stayed to supper. As I was a youngster then, I was sent early to bed, about eight o'clock. I recollect sometimes being lulled to sleep by the beautiful music I heard; but more frequently, I lay awake listening to Charles Durand's fine singing of some operatic music. What I enjoyed most of all, were duets from Italian operas which he and my father sang.

My father had a really charming tenor voice, which blended well with his pupil's grand bass. The celebrated duet from Rossini's "Barbiere," they often sang. On these occasions, I never slept, in fact I felt more like jumping out of bed and calling to them to sing it again. Even as I write, those wondrous harmonies seem to ring again in my ears. Ah! how intense our enthusiasm, how vivid our imagination in the springtime of youth!

The first blush of a new art sensation can seldom be experienced more than once in a life. For as we grow older, we try to analyse. If we see a play we are tempted to look behind the scenes; if we watch the conjurer's feats, we form theories as to how he manipulates them.

. . . . . .

A few months after I had gained the scholarship referred to in the last chapter, an event occurred, which, although having no bearing on my musical studies, made a great and lasting impression upon me. This was the opening of the Great Exhibition of 1851.

I have already stated, that I used, as a boy, to go for my pianoforte lessons to a house close to Highgate Archway. This house was for several years the residence of Sir Charles Fox, the engineer of the Exhibition. It was there that Dr. Wylde, who was a cousin of Lady Fox, resided for some time. Thus it was that I not infrequently dined at Farquhar House, as Sir Charles's residence was named, and so made the acquaintance of the distinguished engineer.

It was natural that I should take additional interest in the Exhibition from the fact of my being personally acquainted with the engineer. He must have been a man of marvellous powers to have carried out so successfully Sir Joseph Paxton's ideas. No building constructed of glass and iron on so large a scale, had ever been erected before. It certainly was an unprecedented piece of engineering, and in a modified form it still exists, under the name of the Crystal Palace. That fairylike structure is, to a great extent, the Exhibition of 1851, removed to Sydenham.

What excitement there was over this Exhibition, and what a wonderful surprise it was to those who saw it for the first time. Imagine the Crystal Palace transported by some magician to Hyde Park, and then you will have some idea of the novel appearance the structure presented. Then the interior was unique, for inside the Exhibition many of the large trees of the park were left standing. But the great height of the building caused them to look comparatively small, so that they quite harmonized with the *tout ensemble.* There were so many objects of interest exhibited, that I am afraid they have quite confused my memory. The wonderful Koh-i-noor diamond perhaps made the deepest impression upon me. Probably this was because of the difficulty experienced in trying to see it, owing to the crowds of people surrounding it. When I obtained a view, it appeared to me very much smaller than I expected. For I had heard so much about its extraordinary size, that I should not have been surprised to have found it as large as the egg of an ostrich. Considering its enormous value, it looked very inadequately protected. But I was told that, by a clever contrivance, should any one have made a dash for it, there was an automatic arrangement, by which the diamond would have disappeared the moment it was touched, whilst, at the same time,

the hand of the culprit would have been caught and held in a kind of trap until the arrival of the police.

One feature of the Exhibition I recollect very well indeed, and that was its division into different countries. One often heard snatches of conversation like the following: "Well! I think we have had enough of France, let us pay a visit to Turkey for a few minutes, and after that we will go and have some tea in Russia before we leave," and so on.

. . . . . .

Two years after the opening of the Exhibition I made my first appearance as a pianist at the New Philharmonic Concerts. This was a great event in my boyhood. I had been present at the inaugural season of this society, but little thought then that in the following year I should appear as a solo pianist at one of the concerts.

A few words about these Concerts may not be out of place. They were instituted at the initiative of Dr. Wylde, in conjunction with Mr. Beale, of the firm of J. B. Cramer & Co., and others; and were on a larger scale, as regards the constitution of the orchestra, than the public were accustomed to in those days. The only mistake committed was that in respect to the name, as that caused great offence to those interested in the

Philharmonic Society. Otherwise, especially during the earlier history of the New Philharmonic, no expense was spared to present to the public some of the finest Orchestral Concerts ever given in London.

With Hector Berlioz as conductor and a large orchestra comprising the most accomplished players, the concerts of the first season left an aftermath of pleasure in the memory of all who heard them. I shall never forget the splendid performance of Beethoven's Choral Symphony. To the fine orchestra was united an excellent chorus of picked voices; whilst for solo singers were chosen Clara Novello, Miss Williams, Sims Reeves, and Staudigl.

Another most interesting occasion, at which I was present, was the third New Philharmonic, given on 24 March, 1852, when Berlioz conducted the first performance, in England, of his "Romeo and Juliet." I, doubtless, was too young at that time to enter fully into the spirit of so advanced a school of music; but, nevertheless, I was much impressed with the effect of the chorus of Capulets, which is sung behind the scenes, as well as with the Scherzo[1] "Queen Mab," which took every one by surprise. At the end of the concert,

[1] It may be interesting to mention that the tymbales d'argent in this Scherzo were played on this occasion by Mr. Ganz and Mr. E. Silas.

Berlioz received quite an ovation, and a wreath of laurels was handed to him by one of the audience.

The day following this performance I saw Berlioz walking down Regent Street, which gave me an opportunity of seeing him at closer quarters. I noticed how deep and poetical was the expression of his features; there was also a look of pleasure in his face such as one might have expected after his artistic triumph of the previous night.

In regard to my début at the New Philharmonic, which took place on 4 July, 1853, at Exeter Hall, certain of the directors of these Concerts at first showed some opposition to my appearance as a performer. I was thought to be too young; and, as then I had played in public only at the Students' Concerts of the Royal Academy, fears were entertained as to the manner in which I might acquit myself. Eventually a compromise was arrived at by which it was decided that I was to play at the rehearsal, and, if the conductor thought well of my performance, my name should then be included in the programme. Louis Spohr, the great violinist and composer, was conductor of the New Philharmonic Concerts during their second season, and it was he who had to decide my fate.

At that time Spohr's music was popular in

England, and his reputation as a great violinist was fresh in the recollection of many; so that his appointment as conductor of the New Philharmonic Concerts was looked upon as quite an event.

In appearance he was a massive style of man, both tall and stout, but his face was intellectual, without, however, the poetical expression of features that I noticed in Berlioz.

Never having played before with so large an orchestra, it was rather an ordeal for me, and I do not say that I was altogether free from nervousness at the rehearsal; but all went well, and Spohr strongly advised the committee to let me play.

At the concert he led me on the platform. How small I must have looked beside him as we walked on together. Of course, I was wearing my jacket with the gold buttons, and I expect I excited the curiosity of the audience who made a great noise when I appeared. I played the D minor Concerto of Mendelssohn from memory, and met with a most encouraging welcome.

Ernest Pauer often used to tell me how he had heard me play on this my first appearance. Amongst those present were, I have understood, Blumenthal, Ganz, and other well-known musicians. In consequence of my success, I was engaged to play at the New Philharmonic Concerts

every season until I went to Germany. Among the Concertos I performed was that of Beethoven in G, always a great favourite with me.

During the years that elapsed between my début and my departure for Leipsic, I continued my pianoforte studies under Dr. Wylde, having been re-elected King's scholar at the Royal Academy. For my second study I took the violin with William Watson as my teacher. In addition to this I began to devote myself earnestly to composition, but found to my discouragement that, although I could extemporize on the pianoforte with great facility, when I endeavoured to put my ideas into definite shape, they wellnigh refused to come at all. They seemed, in fact, as though dried up, and when at last I did succeed in getting a subject or a theme, I found the greatest difficulty in elaborating it. Sometimes a few bars would take me as many months to write before they satisfied me; but I persevered notwithstanding. Of course, practice improved matters as regards facility, but not so much as I had hoped it would; and it was not, indeed, until I composed my music to "The Ancient Mariner" that I wrote with anything like ease; but of this I will speak later on.

I must not here forget to make mention of a very interesting concert at which I played a year

or two prior to going to Germany. This concert was one given at the Crystal Palace, in order to commemorate the centenary of Mozart's birth, and took place in the year 1856.

It was one of the earliest of the Crystal Palace performances, before they had attained the grand proportions arrived at by the celebrated Saturday Concerts. I played the D minor Concerto of Mozart, and introduced a cadence of my own. August Manns conducted, and I then made the acquaintance of Sir George (then Mr.) Grove, who was at that time secretary of the Crystal Palace.

The concert-room in which I played exists no longer, for it was destroyed by the same fire which swept away that section of the palace previously known as the "Tropical Department." In truth, when the flames on that eventful night belched forth into the air, presenting the appearance of a fiery steeple and illumining the country for miles around, it more than earned its title of "Tropical."

The earlier days of the Crystal Palace, likewise, recall to my memory another musical event which occurred a few months before my departure for Germany. This was no less than the first of the great Handel festivals, and was given in the year 1857. Although it was called a preliminary

festival, it was really on the same grand scale as the one which followed it in 1859.

I had the privilege of being one of the instrumentalists on the occasion of the preliminary festival, when I played in the orchestra among the violins. This gave me an opportunity of again hearing Clara Novello, whose pure soprano notes filled the vast edifice from end to end. Among the other singers were Miss Dolby, Mr. Sims Reeves, Herr Formes, and Mr. Weiss. My father and mother sang in the chorus, which was indeed quite a representative one, for nearly every professor of music in London who had a good voice was among the choristers.

Some reference to my studies in organ-playing may not be out of place. From the age of thirteen I had played the organ accompaniments to the Masses of Mozart and Haydn in the church to which my father was attached as conductor of the music. My first engagement was at the Catholic Church in Warwick Street, near Regent Street. There I succeeded German Reed, who at the time had not entered that path of public life in which he afterwards achieved such popularity. It must have been many years prior to his starting the German Reed Illustrations that he was engaged as organist at the Warwick Street Church. I cannot say that his juvenile successor

knew much about the art of organ-playing. When I was appointed organist, I was practically ignorant of the true art of manipulating the king of instruments, although by the aid of the Novello arrangements of the Masses I was able to make some effect, and I soon gained a certain amount of facility in managing the pedals. But it was not true organ-playing, for I scarcely ever made use of an independent pedal part. I should probably never have risen above this slipshod mode of treating the organ, had I not made the acquaintance of Mr. George Herbert. He was a member of the Farm Street congregation, and took so much interest in my organ-playing that he advised me to study it seriously and to take lessons of Mr. George Cooper. This eminent musician was organist at St. Sepulchre's Church as well as assistant organist at St. Paul's Cathedral, where Mr. (afterwards Sir John) Goss presided over the music.

One reason why Mr. Herbert was anxious that I should thoroughly qualify myself in this department of my profession was, that I might in time become eligible for the post of organist at Farm Street Church, in the arrangements for the music of which he took an active part. But my sojourn in Leipsic prevented the accomplishment of his plan. I am glad, notwithstanding, that I took his

advice and studied under George Cooper. That distinguished organist in due course introduced to me those magnificent works of Bach — the so-called pedal fugues. Sometimes he played one of them to me in grand style, for he was a wonderful pedalist, and brought out glorious effects from the fine old organ at St. Sepulchre's. He also introduced me to the three beautiful preludes and fugues of Mendelssohn. The peaceful and melodious prelude of the second one in G, I was never tired of playing. I look back with pleasure to this episode of my student days, when, under the guidance of my accomplished master, I made the acquaintance of so many charming works for the organ.

My first organist engagement at Warwick Street Church, to which I have alluded, did not last more than a year, for a misunderstanding between the clergy of the church and my father in regard to some details in connexion with the music, led to his throwing up his post of conductor, and, as a sequel to this step, I resigned my organ appointment. When this contretemps became known to the head priest at the church of St. Aloysius, Clarendon Square, he at once offered us engagements there in similar departments to those we had occupied at Warwick Street, which we accepted.

On the eve of entering upon our duties at the

new church, as we had been given no time to form a choir, we were somewhat concerned as to how we should manage. But to our surprise, on our first Sunday at Clarendon Square, we found all the members of the Warwick Street Choir assembled. Hearing of the change that had been made, and being very much attached to my father as their conductor, they had resolved to follow him *en masse*. So we were thus able to make an excellent start, much to the gratification of the clergy and congregation of the church.

My Sunday morning at the organ was to me always a source of enjoyment. Besides the choir that had followed us, we had excellent solo singers, and I revelled in the beauty of the Masses of Haydn, Mozart, and Hummel, which we performed, and which are now sadly neglected. I believe that the hearing of choral music weekly did much towards building up my style of choral writing; and later on this proved of great service to me when I was called upon to write cantatas.

CHAPTER III

BOULOGNE AND DOUGLAS JERROLD

ONE great advantage I enjoyed as organist of the church of St. Aloysius was that my organ duties did not interfere with my holidays—the organist's usual difficulty of finding a substitute being solved for me by my predecessor (who had resigned) being always ready to play the Masses whilst I was away.

Speaking of these holidays, however, takes me back to a still earlier period, when staying one summer at Herne Bay as a child of but seven years old. One day in June my two little sisters and I went out to the beach to play. It happened to be high water at the time. Near us was a kind of wooden landing-place or breakwater, supported by planks resting upon trestles, and stretching far into the sea. Boy-like, I took my sisters on to it, and leaving them midway, went myself to the extreme end to swim my boat. The enjoyment of sailing my craft, however, was suddenly interrupted by cries for help from Josephine.

the elder of the two little girls; for the younger one had fallen into the sea! Josephine, with great presence of mind for a child of five, clinging to the breakwater with one hand, managed to snatch hold of her sister with the other, just in time to prevent her being carried away by the tide. So she held her and kept the little one from sinking until help came from the shore.

The incident happened to be witnessed by two gentlemen who were members of the Royal Humane Society, and being struck by the pluck and composure displayed by Josephine, they reported the affair at the next meeting of the Society. As an appreciation of her young heroism, Josephine was awarded the bronze medal of the Society, and at their annual dinner, when the recipients of medals paraded the hall to be introduced to the Lord Mayor, she was carried in the procession by one of the gentlemen, to receive her token.

After this I was always on the look out for some accident which might give me an opportunity of displaying an equal amount of courage, with a similar recognition in the shape of a medal. But somehow the opportunity persistently refused to occur. Neither of my sisters would do me the favour of falling into the sea, to afford me the chance of heroically rescuing one of them, although

for quite a year or two afterwards I always held myself ready for action.

. . . . . .

But to return to the time when I was organist at St. Aloysius, my summer holidays were always spent with my father and mother at Boulogne. This was brought about in consequence of my elder sisters having been sent to the Ursuline Convent, at that town, to be educated. So that instead of their returning home during vacations, we went to Boulogne to see them and to afford them amusement and relaxation. Therefore, every morning, we used to call for them at the convent and, after they had spent the day with us, we would take them back again in the evening.

On one occasion, when we went for them, the Mother Superior, having heard of my musical achievements, asked me if I would play something, as the nuns very much wished to hear me. This I arranged to do, and on the following day, when I reached the convent, I found that the nuns, together with the pupils, were already assembled. I played several pieces to them, and was quite surprised to find how demonstrative in applause they were. When I left it was with the understanding that I was to come and give them another opportunity of hearing me. Each summer that we went

to Boulogne, part of the programme consisted in my giving a small pianoforte recital to the nuns and their pupils.

I forget how many summers we spent there, but I think that during all my student time at the Royal Academy of Music, and perhaps a year or two after, my holidays were accounted for in this way. And a very pleasant place is Boulogne in the summer, with its bright and busy streets, which are all the more enlivened by the mixture of French and English who crowd them. Then the Hauteville gives variety and picturesque character to the place, and the ramparts afford an agreeable promenade on a summer's evening. The harbour too, at high tide, is most interesting. Fishing-boats come in and go out, and the interminable chatter of the *poissardes* in a language which baffles the best French scholar to understand, all give to Boulogne a character novel to English visitors.

Then, if we return to the town and draw nigh to a church, we are sure to find it open, and entering, we experience that feeling of peaceful rest from the busy turmoil of the outer world, which the interior of a sacred edifice so often impresses upon us, conveying a mysteriously religious influence.

At Boulogne there was, and is now, I believe,

quite an English colony, many men having settled in the town after the active work of their lives had been completed in their native country.

At the time of which I am speaking, among those whom I understood to be temporarily living at Boulogne, was Douglas Jerrold,[1] with whom my father had been very intimate several years before. We met him one day, when we were out walking, and I was introduced to him by my father. He then probably looked older than his years should have accounted for, as he seemed quite bent double with age or infirmity. He was very interested at hearing that I was studying at the Royal Academy of Music. He gave me some sage advice, and told me to work well and with zeal for my art.

Douglas Jerrold, as I saw him then, appeared to me to be a very serious man, especially when giving me advice; and one could have scarcely realized that he had in his earlier days been one of the most sparkling wits of the period.

He had been an intimate friend of my uncle, John Barnett, the composer. In consequence of this intimacy, dating many years previously, my father became acquainted with Douglas Jerrold. For, when a youth, my father lived with his elder

[1] It is possible that Jerrold was then only a visitor at Boulogne, as he died at his house in Kilburn Priory in 1857.

brother John, and as my uncle at that time kept an open house, at which all the principal *literati* and wits of the day used to assemble, my father had the opportunity of meeting such men as Thackeray, Douglas Jerrold, and other celebrities.

My uncle told me several anecdotes about Jerrold's witticisms, but I am sorry to say that time has effaced them from my memory, with the exception of one very trifling instance of his drollery, which I will relate.

It is said that Douglas Jerrold one day met a friend of his who was chronically hard up. They had not been long in conversation before his friend said: "I say, Jerrold, I'm rather low in funds, would you lend me a sovereign?" Jerrold, with all the appearance of intense generosity, answered with alacrity, "With the greatest pleasure, my dear fellow, only," he added ominously, "I do not happen to have one about me."

Another well-known man who at that time was also staying at Boulogne, was Henry Russell, the author of many songs beloved by the people. My father knew him well, and we often spent a pleasant hour in company with the composer of "Woodman, spare the tree." I recollect, one day, he asked my father and myself to join him at a fête given at a château in the neighbourhood, which afforded us an opportunity of becoming

acquainted with the mode of life *à la grand seigneur*, as it is, or rather was, carried out in a French country-house. The grounds adjoining the château had a terrace walk from which lovely views of the surrounding country could be obtained.

On the occasion of a visit to Boulogne in the year 1854, I saw, *en passant*, one of the most conspicuous characters of the nineteenth century, who at that time was the powerful ruler of a great nation. I was out walking one fine day, when I saw a vast number of infantry soldiers parading before a staff of generals. Inquiring of a bystander, I learned that they were troops being reviewed by the Emperor Louis Napoleon, previous to their departure for the Crimean War. Presently, I saw Napoleon the Third himself riding past. He was altogether a striking figure. His clear-cut features and pointed moustache gave him a distinguished appearance. The military uniform of Field-Marshal became him well, and he rode his beautiful steed with perfect ease.

Having followed his career from the newspapers from the day of the *coup d'état* which placed him on the throne of France, one can readily imagine the interest I felt on seeing him at close quarters.

I have often wondered that I never saw him whilst he was living in exile at Chislehurst, for I

was during the time a frequent visitor at that charming woodland locality.

Perhaps it is as well I did not see him in those later years, for, as last impressions are the most enduring, it is far better to recollect a man as he was in his prosperity, than to meet with him again when fate has cast her die irrevocably against him.

After the death of the Emperor, I often used to see the Empress and the ill-fated Prince Imperial at the pretty little Chislehurst Chapel.

It was quite touching, when the Empress and her son entered, to witness the congregation rise up in token of respect. How dignified and stately was her figure; with what sympathy she filled us, as she went into her seat in front of the altar. We little thought then that the time was near when her sole remaining hope would be blighted, and the comely youth we saw beside her would perish in a far-off country by the hands of savages.

But the memories of my earlier summer holidays spent so agreeably at Boulogne, and the associations they call forth, must not make me forget the more serious side of my life as a student of musical art.

The two scholarships of which I had enjoyed the advantage at the Royal Academy of Music, had expired; and although I still continued my studies in composition and pianoforte, I felt that

more was to be done, and that my sphere of action needed expansion. So, when Mr. Henry Fowler Broadwood, then the head of the great firm of pianoforte makers, John Broadwood & Sons, proposed my going to Germany, I readily acquiesced in his views, and determined upon acting on his advice.

CHAPTER IV

STUDENT DAYS AT LEIPSIC

MY original idea in going abroad was to make my appearance as a pianist at different towns in Germany. I chose Leipsic in the first instance, because I was anxious to study counterpoint for a time with Moritz Hauptmann, who was regarded as one of the first authorities on that subject.

Not many days after my arrival I found myself on my way to Hauptmann's house. This proved to be a quaint, old-looking building,[1] near the Thomas Schule, of which Hauptmann, like Bach before him, was *Musikdirektor*. There was a bell-handle by the door, which I pulled, when to my surprise the door was opened instantly by a spring. After waiting a minute or two a servant appeared and showed me into Hauptmann's room. This, as I was afterwards told, was the selfsame room that the great Sebastian Bach used as his study, and where, no doubt, he had written the greater number of his immortal works.

[1] This house, I have been informed, exists no longer, as it was pulled down some years ago to make way for improvements in the town.

It was an antique room with panelled wainscoting, and it did not seem as if it had undergone any material change since the time that Bach occupied it.

In a corner near the window was a German stove, which, to me, looked very unlike a stove, compared with our English fireplaces. In fact it had the appearance of a large model tower in white porcelain, reaching almost to the ceiling.

By the wall, opposite the window, was an upright piano, and at the side of the room, near the door, stood a secretaire.

When I entered, with my letter of introduction, Hauptmann was seated at this secretaire writing. A pretty canary was flying about the room, and perched sometimes upon his shoulder. As soon as he was aware of my presence he rose and received me in a very kindly manner.

Hauptmann was a man who impressed one by his appearance as possessing great intellectual powers, and I soon discovered that this was fully borne out by the vast amount of knowledge he possessed on the subject I had purposely come to be enlightened upon.

He was greatly interested when I told him that one of my principal objects in wishing to study with him was to improve myself in fugal writing; and that, although I had for some years worked

hard at contrapuntal studies on the Cherubini system, and had practised writing fugues, I had always felt that there was something wanting in my counterpoint, for which I was continually striving, but could never attain. To this he replied that it would be necessary for me to go through a course of counterpoint with him, commencing from the simplest *canto fermo* exercises.

I was not long in discovering that his method differed very much from that of Cherubini.

In course of time, after having written numerous contrapuntal exercises, I began to work on canon and fugue, at first in two, and afterwards in three or four parts. I then noticed, to my great satisfaction, that I was beginning to write in quite a different style of counterpoint; in fact, more in the style that I had placed before myself as my ideal. The style to which his system evidently led was, curiously, very much the same as that employed by Sebastian Bach, by which the tendency to dryness in counterpoint is avoided.

That Bach's counterpoint, as regards instrumental music, is more homogeneous, and more easily amenable to expressive effects, is evident from the great and increased interest taken in his works by the musical public. Mendelssohn, in following the same lines of counterpoint, showed

his wisdom. For are not his preludes and fugues amongst his most admired compositions?

I have already said that one of my principal objects in going abroad was to appear at some of the important concerts in Germany.

This I found less easy to accomplish than I expected. Having had success as a pianist in England, I thought that that fact would easily gain me admittance to the concert-room in other countries. However, I had a letter of introduction to Julius Rietz (conductor of the Gewandhaus Concerts), which I presented to him, telling him how desirous I was of being heard as a pianist in Germany. He asked me to play something, which I accordingly did; but although he was evidently much pleased with my performance, he only gave me a kind of half promise in regard to my appearance at the Gewandhaus Concerts. This I judged rightly as meaning a polite refusal of my request. For I knew by his manner that the promise was of a very doubtful kind. Nevertheless, I ultimately obtained the object I had in view, although I had to wait a considerable time before I did so.

Meanwhile, I resigned myself to circumstances, and resolved, in place of concert playing, to continue my studies, not only in counterpoint but also in the piano.

Having heard much about Louis Plaidy's method

of technique, and finding that my manner of holding my hands, and other details, were not in accordance with it, I decided upon studying with him.

In the first instance I took private lessons from him, and was thus able to become more thoroughly acquainted with his system than would have been possible in his class at the Conservatorium.

This institution I entered a few months later as a student, where I continued working at counterpoint under Hauptmann.

For the pianoforte I not only had Plaidy as my instructor, but Moscheles as well. I think, in many respects, the greatest advantage I enjoyed was studying with Julius Rietz, who was a wonderful master for enabling the student to give finish and conciseness to his compositions.

Rietz at that time was one of the most notable musicians in Germany, occupying the important post of conductor of the celebrated Gewandhaus Concerts—his predecessor having been no less a person than the far-famed Mendelssohn. Although he had not the same gift for composition as that versatile composer, he fully maintained the great reputation that the orchestral performances at these concerts had acquired. His art standard was extremely high, and his experience in regard to every detail necessary for composition was

JULIUS RIETZ

DR. MORITZ HAUPTMANN

most valuable to the student. In appearance he was very artistic, as the accompanying photograph will show. He did not court society, however, but lived almost entirely for art.

Rietz was a man of quick temper, and woe betide the student who neglected his composition studies, or who ruffled his equanimity in any way. I remember on one occasion that Horneman,[1] a new student fresh from Denmark, forgot to close the door on entering the class-room, whereupon Rietz called to him in angry tones, "Denken Sie dass Sie auf die Strasse sind?" ("Do you think you are in the street?"), which probably sounded more insulting in German than it would have done in English. Horneman was so offended with this rebuff that for weeks he never went near Rietz's class, until I persuaded him to forget the affront offered him and to regard it as Rietz's "little way."

Horneman was looked upon by the students of the Conservatorium as quite a genius, for although his compositions were then somewhat old-fashioned in character and loose in construction, they gave evident signs of originality. He had rather peculiar notions as to making alterations in his work. He maintained that whatever a composer wrote

[1] Horneman, who became a well-known composer, died quite recently, on 8 June, 1906. He was an intimate friend of Grieg.

first was the result of inspiration, and should remain untouched. I had several arguments with him upon this subject. I held that in order to improve in composition it was frequently necessary to make corrections and alterations; that even Beethoven had done so, as is shown by his sketch-books. Horneman's theory was that, in course of time, continual practice would bring the necessary experience and facility.

Rietz's class awakens many interesting recollections. Several of those who attended it have since become famous in the musical world. One of the most prominent among them was Arthur Sullivan, who had come to Leipsic to study as Mendelssohn Scholar. His genial and delightful manners made him, at once, popular with all his fellow-students. I am glad now that I had such good opportunity of being in his company, for I thoroughly enjoyed his society. He had charming boyish ways of his own. For instance, on the evening on which I was to make my début at the Gewandhaus concert, he happened to come into my room whilst I was dressing, and insisted upon tying my white necktie for me, saying: "What a swell you look, Barnett."

He often gave me advice when I got into trouble with any of my compositions, and I sometimes returned the compliment. Thus, I recollect

on one occasion, when he was working at a string quartet, he asked me to help him out of a difficulty, which I did, by writing in a few bars for him.

He, as well as Franklin Taylor, Walter Bache, and Carl Rosa—also fellow-students, I frequently met at my aunt's (Mrs. John Barnett), who, together with her family, was then living at Leipsic. Every Sunday she kept open house for us; and we often passed very enjoyable evenings, at which music was the principal feature.

Three of my cousins were likewise at the Conservatorium: Rosamond, now Mrs. Robert Francillon; Clara, now Mrs. Henry Rogers, living at Boston, U.S.A.; and Domenico, who is pianoforte professor at the Ladies' College, Cheltenham.

The evenings spent at my aunt's house frequently partook of the nature of chamber concerts, at which all in turn took part. We had programmes written out, and Franklin Taylor acted as our critic and wrote MS. articles on our performances or compositions. Sometimes we were rather severely handled by him. At others we received our meed of praise, which we thought all the more of if we had previously come in for severe criticism. On one occasion, some of us agreed to write part-songs which when finished we sang there and then. The soprano and con-

tralto were taken by my cousins Clara and Rosamond; Arthur Sullivan, I think, sang tenor, and Carl Rosa bass, whilst I accompanied on the piano. I believe two or three of these part-songs, in later days, were published, and probably were made public property by the Leslie Choir.

Another time, Sullivan and myself arranged to write trios for whistling; that is to say, the three parts were whistled instead of being sung. I believe the upper part was whistled by Mr. Arthur Payne, who also was frequently at my aunt's. He whistled with such facility that I once heard him execute in this manner portions of one of Spohr's violin concertos, which he knew by heart, as he was a violin student at the Conservatorium. He is now a publisher at Leipsic, as was his father before him, and some years ago he brought out those beautiful miniature editions of the great masters' string quartets, so convenient for taking with one to concerts. Apropos of these whistling trios, I came across one of them some years later, and worked it up into an organ piece, which is now published.

One of my fellow-students at Leipsic was Emil Krause, with whom I took many a walk to the rustic villages that are dotted round that city. As he was anxious to improve his English, whilst I wished to make progress in German conversa-

tion, we had a compact between us, by which it was arranged that we should speak English until we had arrived at the extreme limit of our walk, and on our returning German was to be the medium of our conversation. Emil Krause, ever since his student days, has settled in Hamburg, his native place. He is well known as a composer and writer of studies for improving pianoforte technique.

Another of my fellow-students was Grieg, the celebrated Norwegian composer, but he must have been at the Conservatorium during the latter part of my stay in Leipsic, for I seem to have forgotten that he was my colleague. Indeed, it was Grieg himself who reminded me of it, when I saw him some years ago in the artists' room of St. James's Hall, after he had played his fine concerto at one of the Philharmonic concerts.

I have already stated that I not only studied the piano with Plaidy at the Conservatorium, but likewise with Moscheles. This system of studying the same subject with two masters no doubt has some advantages, but it has also not a few drawbacks. The student soon finds that musicians, like doctors, often disagree. Thus Plaidy initiated us into the mysteries of staccato from the loose wrist, whilst Moscheles advocated octaves from the arm. The student, therefore, had to exercise

his discretion as to which theory to accept in this, as in some other matters. On the whole, in regard to technique one learnt the most from Plaidy, and in respect to style, from Moscheles. The latter gave me many valuable hints in phrasing.

Moscheles was fond of playing over his studies to his pupils, and very finely he rendered them. He evidently regarded them as the best things he had done, and in this he was not mistaken.

I learnt many of Beethoven's Sonatas with him, and the remarks he made in reference to style were all the more valuable and interesting, as he had heard them played by Beethoven himself.

It is curious, however, that he advocated the Hummel method of interpreting the *Phralltriller*, or, as it is now frequently called, the "upper mordent." For I was one day playing the Sonata Pathetique in the lesson, and rendering the upper mordents, which frequently occur in the allegro of the first movement, by giving the accent on the first note of the ornament, which is considered to be the orthodox manner, when he stopped me and directed me to give the accent on the third or main note, as was advocated by Hummel. As Moscheles had heard Beethoven play this sonata, the question arises: Which of the two methods of interpreting the upper mordent did the great composer himself adopt? There is no doubt,

IGNAZ MOSCHELES

however, in my mind, that the orthodox manner, as explained by such authorities as Dannreuther and Franklin Taylor, gives the most pathetic effect to the phrases in which these antique ornaments occur in the sonata.

I ought not to omit the name of E. F. Richter in connexion with my work at the Conservatorium. He took the harmony and some of the counterpoint classes; but as I had gone through a thorough course of harmony whilst a student in London at the Royal Academy of Music, I at once entered his counterpoint classes; and as I still continued my studies in this branch of the art with Hauptmann, it will be seen that I had enough to do to satisfy the contrapuntal demands of my two masters.

Richter had also an organ class, which he held at one of the churches, as there was no organ at the Conservatorium. Being desirous of continuing my studies on this instrument, I entered his class. I found that the German system of playing the pedals differed greatly from the English system. The heel was not used at all, everything being executed with the toe, no doubt for the reason that the pedals are so much wider apart in the German than they are in our English organs. I noticed too that in Germany the swell organ was conspicuous by its absence. He ridiculed the

idea of the use of the swell organ, calling it *Spielerei*, which may be freely translated "child's play."

Richter was a great smoker; so great that even the sacred character of the edifice in which he gave his class did not deter him from indulging in his favourite habit. Had any one entered the church during the time we were receiving our lessons, he would have been surprised at what appeared to be a cloud of incense arising from the organ-loft instead of from the altar. And no wonder, for he would have discovered Richter enjoying a fragrant cigar!

Undoubtedly one of the greatest advantages derived by studying "the divine art" in Leipsic is the opportunity of hearing, frequently, orchestral and chamber concerts. In the Saxon stronghold of music one seems to live amongst musicians. The Gewandhaus is close at hand, whatever part of Leipsic you live in—at least so it always seemed to me when I was there. Whether it is the same now I cannot say, for Leipsic, like most other towns, has increased in size since that time.

I never missed a Gewandhaus Concert if I could help it, and when able to do so I availed myself of the students' privilege of attending the rehearsals. These, I think, we all enjoyed almost better than the concerts, as we heard the orchestra

to greater advantage. The reason of this was that the hall proper of the old Gewandhaus was entirely occupied by the subscribers, so that we had to be content to hear the music from an ante-room which opened into the concert hall, and which was dignified by the name of the Small Hall. From this hall it was impossible to hear the full tone of the orchestra, as it could only reach us through a narrow doorway ; in fact, many *pianissimo* points were frequently quite inaudible, and we had therefore to fill in these points either from imagination or from memory, if they occurred in a familiar composition.

The rehearsals were very interesting. One noticeable feature in them was the distinctive part taken by the leader of the first violins. Ferdinand David then held this post, and by the hints he gave to the violins as regards the bowing and other particulars, much of the excellence of the orchestral performances at the Gewandhaus was due. If he thought the violins weak in any passage he would ask the players to repeat it, and would make them practise it until they attained perfection. The leader of the Gewandhaus orchestra was therefore something more than a name. *En passant*, it may here be mentioned that the late Herr Ludwig Straus, who was well known in connexion with the Monday Popular Concerts,

when leader of the New Philharmonic orchestra, attempted to introduce this custom at one of the rehearsals; but the result was disastrous. A passage for the first violins not going so well as it should have done, Straus asked the performers to play it again. This they patiently did; but still their performance failed to reach the standard he desired, so he requested them to try it again, and yet again. At length murmurs of displeasure were audible, which gradually increased in significance, until the whole orchestra began hissing, so that Straus had no alternative but to take up his violin and withdraw from the orchestra, which, of course, he never entered again.

It is not surprising that my recollections of the Gewandhaus Concerts are teeming with good things of the music of the past. At these concerts I heard for the first time such pianists as Von Bülow and A. Dreyschock, celebrated for his octave playing and his marvellous left hand.[1] Some injury to his right hand made him unable to use it for a period of two years, during which time he practised only with his left. Then too I heard Madame Schumann, Otto Goldschmidt, Marmontel, Jaell, Dupont, Ernest Pauer, Reinecke, and many others.

[1] John Cramer, who heard Dreyschock, was so struck with his wonderful left-hand playing that he said of him: "He has no left hand; he has two right hands."

Those were the days when pianists did not think it beneath them to play a Hummel concerto. Pauer frequently chose one, thereby affording an opportunity of his fine execution being heard to the utmost advantage. Surely it is a pity, if not an injustice, that such works should not occasionally be revived; for there is no doubt that Hummel did much to advance the technique of pianoforte-playing. In this he prepared the ground for the bolder and more complicated forms of passages used by Chopin and Liszt.

Among violinists, Joachim's idealistic playing is centred in my memory, especially in his rendering of the great Beethoven Concerto.

At one of the chamber concerts given in the Gewandhaus I heard him, with Madame Schumann, in Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata, as well as in the C Minor Sonata, op. 63. Their interpretations of these beautiful works are among the reminiscences I love to dwell upon.

Ferdinand David's leading of the string quartets at these concerts was a noticeable feature. He was the finest exponent of the quartet style of violin-playing that I had ever heard. The warmth of tone he imparted to his performance of the first-violin part in the masterpieces of quartet music seemed to instil itself into the other players, so that the *tout ensemble* was a veritable musical treat.

He was also one of the most accomplished solo violinists of his time, and has left many important violin compositions to perpetuate his memory. It will be interesting to violinists to know that I lately found a photograph of this great player, which I had brought back with me from Leipsic. In this portrait we see him holding the instrument he loved so well. Although under the average height he was a distinguished-looking man, with a pleasing and open expression of countenance.

At one of the chamber concerts about which I have been speaking, I heard a performance of Beethoven's big fugue for strings in B flat, op. 133.

I recollect once, after the concert in which this fugue had been performed, the late Bernsdorf, the celebrated musical critic, speaking to me about it, and using in English a very strong and characteristic expression in condemnation of it. This he further emphasized by prefixing to it a word frequently used to give vent to one's feelings, and commencing with the fourth letter of the alphabet.

Bernsdorf was an occasional visitor at my aunt's, and he often amused us with his remarks on musical matters, which he gave in excellent English. Although he had never been in England, he spoke our language perfectly, possessing not only a remarkable command of its idioms, but

LOUIS PLAIDY

FERDINAND DAVID

even of its slang expressions. On the other hand, Plaidy, who had many more opportunities of practising it, having a large number of English pupils, was very imperfect in his knowledge of it. I remember once my aunt invited Plaidy and his mother to spend the evening. Appearing alone, he excused his mother's absence on account of indisposition, adding by way of explanation, that "old womânses is very delîecate"; the pronunciation and accents being given as indicated. This was intended to mean that "old women are very delicate."

It was a great disappointment to me that neither Liszt nor Rubinstein ever played at the Gewandhaus during my stay at Leipsic, both these great men, at that time, having devoted themselves almost exclusively to composition. Liszt, however, visited Leipsic whilst I was there, and I was present when he conducted his fine Graner Mass[1] in the Thomas Kirche. The energy with which he wielded his baton on this occasion was remarkable; added to which, he at times became so excited that he literally jumped into the air. There was one point in the performance that greatly impressed me. This was the repetition of a note in octaves, played by the trumpets, which continued through many bars with harmonies that were often

[1] This work was first performed at the consecration of Gran Cathedral, 31 August, 1856.

quite foreign to it. One wondered how it could be made to fit in with such extraordinary harmonic changes. Of course, it was an instance of what musicians call an inner pedal point, an effect so beloved of Beethoven, but in this case carried to the extreme limit.

I always look back with gratification to the fact that Liszt was present at a concert in Leipsic at which I played Weber's first Sonata in C. His demonstrative appreciation of my performance I regard as the greatest compliment I have ever received, for I saw him applauding me vigorously when I was recalled to the platform.

Liszt at the time I recollect him was a striking personality. His hair was then jet black, and he wore it exceedingly long. His hands appeared to be large, and his fingers tapering. I should not have known him again when, years after, I saw him on his last visit to England.

The first composition of mine published was brought out in Leipsic a few months before I left, by Kistner's. This was my "Caprice Brillante."

It came about in this way.

I played it at one of the *Abendunteraltungen* of the Conservatorium, as the weekly students' concerts of that institution were called. It pleased the audience so much that they disregarded the

rule against applause, and the late Herr Gurkhaus, then head of the firm of Kistner, who was present, came up to me after the concert and asked me if I would like it to be published. I answered in the affirmative, and I subsequently enjoyed the particular gratification which comes only once in a composer's life, of seeing for the first time a composition of my own in print.

These *Abendunteraltungen*, to which I have just referred, often afforded the students the opportunity of hearing some celebrated artist of world-wide repute, whom the Director, Herr Schleinitz, would invite to sing or play after the ordinary programme had come to an end.

I remember on one of these occasions we heard Wilhelmina Schroeder-Devrient. She was, indeed, a link with the past of supreme interest, for her personality carried us back to one of the most eventful epochs in the history of music. It was in the time of Beethoven that she was in the zenith of her fame, and from all accounts she must have been a wonderful singer. Her magnificent rendering of *Leonora* in "Fidelio" perhaps saved that beautiful work from oblivion, as prior to the performance in which she took part the opera had been but coldly received. Beethoven, it is said, was so delighted with her singing that after the performance he patted her on the cheek, and could

not find words strong enough to express his gratitude to her.

Of course, when we students heard her much of the beauty of her voice had faded, but the fire of her genius was far from being extinguished. I shall never forget the intense passion she infused into her rendering of Schumann's grand *Lied*, "Ich grolle nicht." The dramatic force she gave to the music thrilled us to such a degree that we could scarcely curb our enthusiasm, and she received quite an ovation. This occasion was probably the last of her triumphs, as she died in the year 1860.

CHAPTER V

THE SCHILLER FESTIVAL—SAXON SWITZERLAND—LAST DAYS AT LEIPSIC

THE recollections of my Leipsic days are not wholly confined to incidents connected with music, for I was in this city during the time of the Schiller Festival, which was held in commemoration of the centenary of that great poet's birth, and which took place in 1859.

This proved to be a most interesting occasion. There were all kinds of public demonstrations, inaugurated on a most extensive scale, one of them being a procession of emblematical cars representing the various trades and professions, carried out in a very effective manner. Then, in the evening, there was a torchlight procession by the students of the University.

An interesting episode in the Schiller Festival was a celebration at Golis, a village near Leipsic, where the great poet had lived for some time. The house in which he wrote his "Ode to Joy" was illuminated, and there was of course a great

crowd to witness all the grand doings. I was among the crowd, and found it much easier to get in than to get out; in fact, I felt nearly crushed to death before I succeeded in extricating myself from its toils.

The so-called book-fairs of Leipsic were most interesting. As a matter of fact, book-fair is a misnomer, as the business done on these occasions is almost entirely in various kinds of merchandise, especially woollen fabrics. These fairs, which were held in the market-place, brought merchants and traders from all parts of Europe to barter their goods one with another, and, as many were accompanied by their wives and families, one had an opportunity of seeing no end of curious and picturesque national costumes.

During the time of these fairs Leipsic was full to overflowing, so that it was quite a common thing for householders to let all their bedrooms to some merchant and his family, and for the inmates to make shift by sleeping in attics and box-rooms, or even in the passages and landings. By this means the owners of houses made quite a harvest out of the merchants, for exorbitant terms were charged to these foreign visitors.

I ought not to omit giving some account of a most agreeable and interesting trip that I took with my uncle (John Barnett) and his family to

THE MARKET PLACE, LEIPSIC

what is known as the Saxon Switzerland. This was during one of the summer holidays, when we had finished our work at the Conservatorium and had plenty of time at our disposal.

We first visited Dresden, where we stayed two days. The first day we went to see the celebrated picture gallery. Of course the painting that left on us the most lasting impression was the celebrated Sistine Madonna by Raphael.

This grand masterpiece has a separate room devoted entirely to itself. On each side of the picture are curtains, which are drawn aside so as to disclose what might be thought to represent a glimpse into heaven. In the other rooms there are to be found no end of Cuyps, Wouvermanns, Teniers, and other representatives of the Dutch school. But I will dive no deeper into my recollection of the works of art that abound in this noble gallery.

On the day following we were to have visited the Green Vaults in the Royal Palace, where the crowns that were worn centuries ago by monarchs of the past, as well as jewels and other articles of vertu, were displayed, we were told, in tempting profusion.

Unfortunately, an unlooked-for incident compelled us to forgo the pleasure of seeing this wonderful collection, for shortly after breakfast

our waiter informed us that some one wished to see my uncle on important business. After a few minutes' absence my uncle returned to tell us that he had been summoned to appear at the Politzei, or police-court! The reason the officer gave for detaining my uncle was that a man of the name of John Barnett had absconded from Hamburg, having embezzled a large sum of money, and that the description of my uncle and his family was almost identical with that of the criminal.

This strange coincidence spoilt our day, as my uncle had to attend the Politzei, and was kept there for about four hours, whilst telegrams were being sent to London and Leipsic in order that he might prove his identity. My cousin Domenico and myself accompanied him, and whilst we were waiting in the passage we amused ourselves by drawing caricatures of the police officials. In that harmless manner we gave vent to our wrath at having to pass the best part of the day in such gloomy surroundings.

Of course the police in the end had to own their mistake, and thought no doubt that by a few words of apology they had fully compensated my uncle for the disagreeable position in which they had placed him. They were probably not a little disappointed that he was not the man who was "wanted."

My recollections of Dresden were somewhat spoilt by this unlooked-for incident, but nevertheless the impression it left upon me was very marked.

I was much struck with the bright and cheerful character of this city. How pretty is the view from the bridge beneath which flows the Elbe. Of course the stranger makes the inevitable mistake of attempting to cross the bridge on the wrong side, and wonders why he is turned back, until he finds that for foot-passengers there is an up and a down side flanking the roadway over the bridge.

We left Dresden in one of the little steamers that ply up and down the Elbe, and we disembarked at the picturesque town of Schandau, where my uncle had engaged apartments.

I was greatly impressed by the varied character of the scenery in Saxon Switzerland. My uncle did not consider it so grand as that of North Wales; but I think that Saxon Switzerland contains a greater number of special effects than one finds among the Welsh mountains. The Kuhstall is a good example. Passing through a tunnelled cavern not far from the summit of this mountain, you find yourself on a terrace or balcony formed of rock, commanding a splendid bird's-eye view of the mountain range. The

absence here of any foliage, whilst giving a wild grandeur to the scene, no doubt affords an opportunity for an excellent echo.

I rather think that it is this particular echo which is celebrated for giving the facetious answer to the question, "Wer ist der Burghermeister von Oberwesel?" ("Who is the mayor of Oberwesel?") The answer returned by the echo is invariably "Esel," which means, as every one knows, "Ass!"; for only the last two syllables of Oberwesel can be heard, the first part being drowned by one's own voice. Of course we all tried the effect, and were much amused at the clear way in which the echo gave out the "Esel."

This reminds me of a good witticism in one of the German comic prints. The scene depicted is on the side of a mountain, which a tourist and his guide are ascending. The guide says to the tourist, "There is a capital echo here; you just try it. Call out, 'Holen Sie mir ein Glas Bier.'" ("Fetch me a glass of beer.") This the tourist does in stentorian tones, and after waiting an absurd time for a possible echo, he turns to the guide, saying, "I do not hear anything."

"Have a little patience," says the guide. "Look, here it comes," and so indeed it does. For from a little refreshment cabin on a plateau on the mountain-side, which the guide was well aware of,

a man is seen descending with a glass of beer, which the tourist of course gives to the guide as a reward for his cunning.

During my stay at Schandau, as there was no Catholic church nearer than Niedergrund, a quaint little village in Bohemia, I used to go there by train every Sunday morning. It was quite a short railway ride across the frontier which divides Saxony from Bohemia; but I found, on arriving at Niedergrund, that I was obliged to show my passport and leave it with the station-master to have it vizéed and stamped, previous to its being given up on the return journey. This little piece of red-tapism was duly carried out each Sunday that I went to and came from Niedergrund. From this it would appear that the government official is incapable of recognizing any one, however often he may have seen the individual.

Niedergrund is quite close to a charming bit of the river Elbe. The pines here grow close to the water's edge, from which they climb to the summit of a steep mountain. The water is of a lovely deep blue, reflecting the sombre tints of the pine wood. The village was, and probably is still, a most primitive place, and the architecture of the church was both simple and unpretentious.

I noticed that the congregation waited outside until the arrival of the priest. Then when he had

entered the congregation followed him, and took their places.

The music was as primitive as the building, yet there was actually an attempt at an orchestra. The impression most strongly left upon me by this attempt was the tuning of the stringed instruments. They seemed to be constantly getting out of tune. In listening to those rustic musicians one could not help noting the similarity of their rude efforts in *ensemble* playing to the clever musical joke of Mozart, known as "Ein musikalische Spass." Probably now that American organs are so cheap, one of these will have taken the place of this crude village orchestra.

During our stay at Schandau, we made numerous excursions to the principal places around, but as a description of these can easily be found in a continental guide-book, I do not propose giving an account of them; more especially, as our excursions went smoothly and without incident. If one of our party had been struck by lightning, or another had fallen over a precipice, I should, of course, have had something exciting to relate; but as the nation that has no history is a happy one, so the tourist who has nothing particularly tragic to narrate is to be congratulated.

One of the most interesting events that took place whilst I was in Germany was the unveiling

of a statue of Handel in 1859 at his birthplace, Hallé,[1]

This proved to be quite a festive occasion. A number of the students from the Leipsic Conservatorium, myself among the number, took part in the ceremony. We were likewise present at a performance of "Samson," the work of Handel which was selected to represent the king of oratorio composers. The performance was very impressive; but I think the choice of the "Messiah," as Handel's most representative work, would have been more appropriate.

Some minor episodes connected with my stay in Leipsic I will speak of later on. But I must not close this chapter without reference to my appearance as a pianist at the Gewandhaus Concert, which took place on 22 March, 1860.

As I had in the first instance come to Germany in the hope of playing at one of these concerts, had I returned to England without having done so, I should have felt that I had failed in accomplishing the principal object I had in view. On the evening of the concert I proved to be in good form, and, on appearing before the critical audience, met with a most favourable reception. The concerto I played was Mendelssohn's D Minor, a work for which I had always had a great

[1] This was to celebrate the centenary of the composer's death.

affection. At the conclusion, I received a hearty recall, and my performance was well spoken of in the subsequent press notices. This concert was one of the last conducted by Julius Rietz at the Gewandhaus. A few days after it had taken place I left for England, and that very same week Rietz, having accepted the post of conductor of the opera at Dresden, quitted Leipsic for good.

CHAPTER VI

REAPPEARANCE IN ENGLAND—THE PHILHARMONIC AND MY FIRST CONCERT

OF course, returning to England was quite an event for me, for I had never been so long away from home. It was just a question before I left Leipsic, whether I should have arranged to prolong my stay for another year. Schleinitz—the Director of the Conservatorium—did all he could to persuade me to do so; but having promised Dr. Wylde to appear at the New Philharmonic Concerts, I determined upon adhering to my original plan.

I returned via Calais and Dover, after a rather rough passage, for which, being always a good sailor, I was none the worse. Nothing extraordinary occurred on the journey, but on my way from Folkestone to London, when the collector came round for tickets I could not find mine anywhere, and I had my fare to pay over again. It was only when the collector had departed that I remembered having placed the ticket in one of my bags.

A few days after I arrived in London I played the so-called Emperor Concerto of Beethoven at the New Philharmonic Concert which took place on 16 April, 1860. At the rehearsal my hands were cold, and I was not satisfied with my playing; but at the performance it went very well, and I met with all the encouragement I could have wished for from the audience. At the last New Philharmonic Concert of that season, I played again by request, choosing the same concerto of Mendelssohn in which I made my first appearance at these concerts.

I was now fully launched as a pianist, and the following season, besides performing again at the New Philharmonic, I was engaged to play at one of the concerts of the Musical Society.

This Society marked, for the time being, an important era in the musical history of London. The subscribers consisted almost entirely of professional musicians. Alfred Mellon, one of the race of accomplished English orchestral conductors, the line of which is so admirably continued at the present day by such men as Sir Charles Stanford, Frederic Cowen, and Henry J. Wood, was the conductor of these concerts, and the orchestra attained a great reputation under his direction.

The concerto I was asked to play was that of Mozart in C, one of the simpler specimens of that

composer's works in this form of writing. I was rather disappointed at the choice, as it gave no opportunity for the execution of passages of great difficulty. Mozart, however, is never quite easy to render. The very simplicity of the passages calls for the utmost refinement of touch. The public, however, do not quite appreciate difficulties of this nature, as they want occasionally to be excited by surprising feats of bravura. I was, nevertheless, able, in the cadenza which I wrote for the first movement, to introduce many passages requiring a good deal of brilliancy of execution, and that without writing out of the Mozart character.

I may here state that the Committee of the Musical Society did not give me much time to get up the concerto; in fact, I received the letter engaging me to play it only three weeks before the concert, which was arranged to take place on 10 April, 1861. This was sharp work indeed, for I had never even seen or heard the concerto, as it is one rarely chosen by pianists. I had, therefore, to get it up from memory and write a cadence in three weeks, or probably less. Notwithstanding these disadvantages, I am glad to say that fortune favoured me. The concerto went well and made all the effect I could have desired.

I had not yet appeared at the historic Philharmonic Society, but the same year, I received an

engagement to play Beethoven's C minor Concerto at the concert arranged for 10 June, 1861. Sterndale Bennett conducted, and the orchestral accompaniments were, throughout, very neatly and beautifully rendered.

The space Beethoven has left for the cadenza in the first movement I filled in with one I wrote specially for this performance, which I hope one day to publish.

The following season I was again engaged to play at the Philharmonic, when I chose the E flat of Beethoven. Both these concerts took place at the Hanover Square Rooms, for the Society had not then migrated to St. James's Hall.

There was something very social about the Philharmonics during the time they were held at these rooms. In the interval between the parts many of the subscribers took the opportunity to leave their seats and promenade the spacious corridors that adjoined the concert room. I invariably followed their example, and in this way I frequently met with celebrities of the musical world whom otherwise I might never have come across. Amongst them I recollect Charles Neate, then well advanced in years, who had been the most famous English pianist of his day. It was he who played Beethoven's Concertos in C minor and E flat for the first time in England. Sometimes I

met Vincent Wallace, the composer of "Maritana" and other operas. I ought not to forget to mention also that it was in the Hanover Square Rooms, at a Philharmonic concert, I heard Madame Schumann play her husband's concerto, then quite new to an English audience.

Besides the concerts which I took part in, I gave one yearly myself. The first of these took place at St. James's Hall with full orchestra, at which Ole Bull, a celebrated Swedish violinist, played; Sims Reeves sang in Purcell's "Come if you dare," with chorus and orchestra; and I performed a concerto, conducted by Dr. Wylde.

At one of my concerts Carlotta Patti appeared. She was celebrated as a soprano for the high range of her compass, as she could take the F above the staff with perfect ease and great purity of tone. For my chamber concerts I wrote my Trio in C minor, I also produced my quartet in D minor and my Quintet in G minor for strings.

In 1862 I was present at a most interesting celebration. This was the Jubilee of the Philharmonic Society, when it attained its fiftieth anniversary. The concert took place in Exeter Hall, and gave me an opportunity of hearing Jenny Lind once more. She sang on this occasion in Mendelssohn's Psalm, "Hear my prayer." I shall never forget the religious fervour she threw into

the music allied to the words, "Oh, for the wings of a dove." This was the last time I heard her in public.

It is curious to carry one's recollection back to this concert, and at the same time to know that in a few years the Society will be celebrating another jubilee—its hundredth anniversary. Thanks to the energy of past directors like the late Walter Macfarren and Charles Stephens, as well as the self-sacrifice in the cause of musical art shown by such men as Dr. Cummings, Francesco Berger, and Charles Gardener, it has tided over many a shoal that would surely have wrecked any other musical craft less well piloted. The Philharmonic, in fact, stands alone as the only concert society in London, instituted during the last century, which still remains as a glorious record of music both past and present.

Before proceeding farther, I ought not here to omit stating that one of the first professional engagements I entered upon, after my return from Leipsic, was the resuming of my organ duties at the church of St. Aloysius, Somers Town, which I gave up when I went to Germany. My father was still the conductor and solo tenor; and I found the choir had increased in numbers and efficiency.

At this period ladies were allowed to sing in

Catholic churches in London, which gave us an opportunity of engaging well-known artists to represent the soprano and contralto solo parts in the Masses. Thus, about the year 1863, for some months Madame Rudersdorff, the celebrated operatic prima donna, was our soprano. She was invaluable; for not only did she sing in the solos, but led the soprano part of the chorus as well. The way in which she took the high notes, with such unerring precision and beauty of tone, quite made us thrill with musical joy. She seemed to soar above the other sopranos, as though the voice of an angel from above had joined them. Then we had for our bass singer Mr. W. H. Weiss, the Elijah of the Birmingham Festivals, the finest bass voice of that period. We were thus able to give an effective rendering of the Masses of the great composers, — these works of beauty, in which melody and harmony combine to emphasize the sacred words that are sung, filling our souls with religious fervour and devotion.

During the latter period of my engagement at our church, we were fortunate in having the advantage of hearing the mellow notes of Miss Bessie Palmer, who was our contralto for a few years.

Among the congregation who attended at this church was a distinguished composer and violinist;

no less a person than Bernard Molique, of continental reputation. I often saw him after Mass, and, as nearly all my voluntaries and postludes were extemporaneous, I was much gratified at his kindly remarks about them. He took a great interest in our choir, and he wrote a Mass especially for us, which we performed for the first time one Sunday. A very favourable notice of it appeared on the following Saturday in the "Athenæum"; for Chorley, the critic, came specially to our church to hear the new Mass.

Molique, although he had been so long in England, never mastered the difficulties of our language. He often used to narrate in his broken English a little incident that occurred when he made his first appearance as a juryman. He said that the usher of the court, on reading over the names of those summoned, called out in a loud voice, "Mr. Moliky."

This mispronunciation of his name, Molique treated with silent contempt. "I deed not answer," he told us. "Mr. Moliky!" again shouted the usher. Still Molique was silent.

"Mr. Moliky! Mr. Moliky!" was echoed through the court.

Then arose Molique, and quietly said: "My name is not Moliky—but Molique," giving the

foreign pronunciation of the *i* that acute effect so noticeable in foreign tongues.

Molique appeared to be quite delighted at the discomfiture of the usher, who I expect revenged himself by contriving to include Molique among the number of the jury.

Although in no way connected with music, it may not be out of place here to narrate a little incident which occurred somewhere in the sixties.

At that time my only brother, William, was living, and it happened that he had accompanied me to Southend, where we had gone for a short holiday. One day we hired a small boat, with the object of rowing out beyond the pier, which is a mile and a quarter in length. The sea was then as smooth as a sheet of glass, so that we considered it quite safe to choose a small and light boat. We had rowed up to the end of the pier, and were about to pass beyond it, when a boatman, who was standing on one of the landing-places, called out to us, and asked us whether we would mind taking him in our boat and rowing him to another one, which was anchored somewhere near the shore.

I was not altogether pleased with this request, as it interfered with our plans. However, I consented to it, and took the boatman with us. It was fortunate for us that I did not refuse; for a

few moments after he had entered our boat a sudden squall arose, and in an incredibly short space of time the sea became so rough, that I felt sure that, without the aid of the boatman, my brother and myself, inexperienced as we were, would never have been able to have kept our little craft from being swamped. It seemed, indeed, quite providential that this boatman should have appeared on the scene just in time to avert a disaster.

CHAPTER VII

"THE ANCIENT MARINER"

DURING the years that I was so much engaged in playing in public I did not altogether neglect composition, as in addition to the pieces I wrote for my chamber concerts, I worked at a symphony, as well as at my oratorio, "The Raising of Lazarus."

Somewhere about the year 1863, the Musical Society of London announced giving trials of new orchestral compositions. For these they engaged an excellent orchestra, and appointed a small committee of well-known musicians to choose the works. I accordingly sent in my symphony, which was then finished, and together with other compositions it was selected for performance at one of these orchestral trials. Subsequently it had the good fortune to be included in the programme of the Society's concert for June 15, 1864. And in the ensuing winter season August Manns introduced it at the Crystal Palace Saturday Concerts.

The favourable manner in which my symphony was received was probably one of the reasons that induced the Committee of the Birmingham Musical Festival to ask me to write a cantata for the Festival of 1867.

Curiously enough, about two years prior to this date I had seen a copy of Noel Paton's illustrations to Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner" at a friend's house. I am ashamed to say that, at the time, although a lover of poetry, I had never read this particular poem. Noel Paton's drawings made a great impression upon me by their weird character, and thus gave me the idea that the "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" would be a splendid subject for a cantata. But I had a notion then that the cantata style would not suit me, for I thought, of all forms of composition, it would be the most unlikely style that I should ever attempt to write in. When, however, I received the letter from the chairman of the Birmingham Festival, Colonel Mason, commissioning me to write a work for the Festival, my ambition was fired. And well it might have been; for had I not heard the gorgeous orchestra and chorus of a Birmingham Festival about two years before, the memory of which seemed to be awakened afresh in me on receiving this welcome letter.

This Festival of 1864 was the first at which I

was ever present, and I was fortunate in having the free *entrée* to all the performances through the kindness of Madame Rudersdorff, whose influence was thus beneficially exerted in my favour.

The memory, therefore, of this wonderful week came back to me vividly on receiving the commission to write a cantata; so that I felt it was an opportunity not to be thrown away. But I had my misgivings. I have already said how slow I was at composing. Judging by the time I usually took over a composition, three years would not have been too long a period for me to have allowed myself for such a work. Would it be possible for me to get it ready in time?

As I had received the commission from the Festival Committee in November, 1866, and the chorus parts would be required in March, I was left only four months to complete the cantata.

I decided, notwithstanding, to accept the commission.

Then as to the libretto. Of course, the recollection of Noel Paton's illustrations made me think of the "Ancient Mariner." But I had not even then read the poem, nor had I a copy of Coleridge's works in the house. I sent to procure one, and my cousin, Joseph Barnett, who happened to be staying with us, read aloud the poem to me, while my father, mother, and my sisters were present.

I was, as might have been expected, deeply impressed with it, but had my doubts as to its suitability for music. At first sight the Mariner's narrative appeared to be more appropriate for a scena of inordinate length than for a cantata. This difficulty had probably deterred composers from taking the subject for music. Notwithstanding this, I arrived at the conclusion that it was quite reasonable to consider the chorus and solo voices in the light of the reciters of the poem; in other words, I proposed to write a work that would be a musical reading of Coleridge's verses.

The theoretical question having been disposed of, I looked at the poem with an eye to its musical possibilities. At first, I thought it appeared too gloomy for effective treatment, and also the words in many cases seemed to be scarcely suited for musical treatment. Nevertheless, I determined upon making an attempt; and that same evening sat down at the piano with the volume open before me.

The phrase with which the basses and tenors enter:—

> "It is an ancient Mariner,
> And he stoppeth one of three,"

came to me quite easily, and I was delighted to find that the words went well to music, and their metre suitable to any kind of musical rhythm.

Having once found an opening phrase, I discovered that the verses assisted my ideas so well, that before I gave up for the evening I had completed not only the preliminary recitatives, but the sketch of the first chorus, "The ship was cheered," which contains the initial melody of the cantata.

Never before had I composed with such facility. The sketch thenceforward developed rapidly, and my doubts about finishing the work in time for the festival were to a great extent relieved.

Still there was the instrumentation to be taken into account. The sketch of a cantata by itself would be of no use to a festival. I knew what a time-taking thing orchestration was, and how dangerous it would be to leave it until too late. I therefore, with as little delay as possible, commenced that all-important part of my work.

In order to gain time, I used to rise each morning before six, make myself an impromptu breakfast, and then work at the instrumentation for over two hours before going to my teaching engagements.

On my journeys I often carried with me a copy of Coleridge, in order to select those parts of the "Ancient Mariner" best suited to the cantata.

The selections and arrangement of the words were in themselves rather difficult tasks. The whole

poem it would have been impossible to take, not only on account of its length, but likewise owing to many of its verses being unsuitable for music. The episode of the phantom ship I decided upon omitting altogether. On the margin of the poem I marked out the disposition of the musical numbers, as to whether they should be for solo or chorus. Those portions of the poem where the individuality of the Mariner is most prominent I allotted to the baritone. In this manner, I was able to avail myself of certain opportunities of a dramatic character, as for example, at the point where the wedding-guest interrupts the old sailor with the words :—

> "God save thee, ancient Mariner !
> From the fiends, that plague thee thus !—
> Why look'st thou so ? "

And he replies :—

> "With my cross-bow
> I shot the albatross."

I have given the words of the wedding-guest to the tenor, and those of the Mariner, as just stated, to the baritone.

Such episodes of a dramatic character I found very useful in giving relief to the generally descriptive tone of the poem.

The modern idea as to the method of writing such works as cantatas and oratorios, is that they

should be composed of scenes, in which the music runs on without coming to any finish until the end of a scene is reached. That this system in a dramatic work is a great gain is undeniable; but its advantages in a descriptive cantata are not so obvious.

One reason why I found the "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" so adapted for separate numbers was, that the poet generally describes one subject at a time without introducing desultory matter. Thus:—

> "About, about, in reel and rout
> The death-fires danced at night,"

pictures a weird scene, and gives scope for the composer writing in a given style; in this case somewhat in the style of incantation music. Another advantage I found in regard to the words, is that they allow of judicious repetition according to the exigencies of the music.

The theory which places a ban against the repetition of words would shut out of the field and render impossible some of the greatest efforts of musical art, as for example, such sublime choruses as Handel's "He sent a thick darkness" and "He gave them hailstones for rain." One of the special advantages in vocal music is, that it enables a composer to dwell upon and intensify some characteristic subject. Without repetition of words,

this in many cases is impossible. Then again, in choral writing, counterpoint would be impracticable without one part repeating the words that another voice has previously enunciated. As a matter of fact, for the writing of choral fugues or other contrapuntal devices, a few words which the audience can easily recollect are the most available. This style of writing no doubt leads to some strange anomalies. Thus, whilst one part is singing a certain set of words, another part is frequently singing quite a different sentence; the two sets of words more or less clashing with one another, Such discrepancies in art are not confined to music alone. It might, for example, be said that in a picture of a battle, or any other subject representing figures in motion, the figures should move as they do in a kinematograph, and that, therefore, their remaining stationary is an absurdity.

Something has to be left to the imagination in every art, and in this respect music is not an exception.

Although I cannot say that in writing "The Ancient Mariner" I used leitmotiven in the Wagnerian sense, I did not lose sight of them altogether; for whenever the poetic theme admits some musical phrase is allied to it. Thus there are about seven leitmotiven of this kind, which form

connecting links with different portions of the cantata.

During the composition of the greater part of the music my ideas came to me as easily as they did in the opening chorus, but there were some exceptions. Thus the quartet, "Around, around, flew each sweet sound," gave me a great deal of trouble. Indeed, I wrote first one quartet, then another, and fully worked them out; both of which I rejected. My third attempt was more fortunate, and is the one I included in the work.

In spite of these delays, however, I was able to send in the choral parts for rehearsal in the March preceding the Festival, and a few weeks later I was asked to conduct a rehearsal myself.

I was glad to find that the chorus had entered thoroughly into the spirit of the music, and I was charmed with the breadth of tone and beauty of the voices, as well as with the precision of attack that they had acquired under the guidance of their accomplished choirmaster, Mr. W. Stockley. I heard that same evening the rehearsal of portions of Sterndale Bennett's "Woman of Samaria," which was to be performed at the same Festival, and I was much struck with the beauty of the choral writing.

A few weeks before the London orchestral rehearsals, which took place at the end of July,

I called upon Sir Michael Costa, with the object of asking him to conduct my cantata. Costa at this time occupied a unique position in the musical world, and was looked upon as the king of conductors. No wonder, therefore, that whilst making my way to his house in Eccleston Square I felt as if I were about to lay a petition before a prince. The great conductor received me very kindly, and asked me to play over my cantata to him. He heard it all through; and although he made one or two suggestions, it evidently took his fancy. On asking him if he would conduct it, he replied that he had made it a rule never to undertake that office in regard to a composer's work on its first performance. This resolution had been arrived at in consequence of an unfortunate misunderstanding between him and Sterndale Bennett, which occurred at a Philharmonic rehearsal of a new overture by the latter that Sir Michael was conducting. It was therefore arranged that I should myself conduct the performance of my work.

As I had never undertaken such a duty before, I prepared myself for doing so by studying the subject from Berlioz's directions in his work on instrumentation. I likewise frequently beat time with a pencil for a baton, whilst giving my pupils their lessons, by which means I acquired familiarity with the different kinds of methods suitable

for various rhythms. Thus it was that when I rehearsed my cantata no one would believe that I was conducting an orchestra for the first time.

Previous to the orchestral rehearsal I went through the arias and recitatives of the work with the singers to whom the solos had been allotted. The artists selected for my cantata were Mlle. Titiens, Madame Patey, Mr. Sims Reeves, and Mr. Santley. This afforded me an opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with them.

I rehearsed the soprano solo part of the cantata more frequently with Titiens than with the other singers, as, notwithstanding her wonderful powers of voice, she was somewhat slow in taking in new ideas; but I found her most patient, and ever ready to listen to what I suggested. I enjoyed these rehearsals with this gifted singer immensely. Her beautiful house and garden in Grove End Road lent a charm to her surroundings.

As regards the contralto solos it had been arranged that Madame Sainton-Dolby should have sung them, but she found the aria, "O sleep it is a gentle thing," too high for her voice, so the part was transferred to Madame Patey, whom it suited quite well. The baritone music, although high, lay excellently within Mr. Santley's compass.

With Sims Reeves I had some difficulty in regard to the music allotted to him; for on trying

it through with me at his house at Norwood, he said that most of the recitatives were too high for him. I accordingly went through them with him, and made numerous alterations so as to bring the compass down to what he required. I was sorry for this, because these alterations interfered very much with the character of the music, and the cantata being then printed, I foresaw that it would appear strange for him to be singing different notes to those in the copy. I think that he, in the end, must likewise have taken this view of the case; because at the performance I was surprised to find that he sang the recitatives exactly as they were printed, and probably was then singing them at sight, as he was never present at any of the rehearsals; on those occasions the tenor solos had been taken by Mr. (now Dr.) W. H. Cummings.

It was only by the merest chance that Sims Reeves put in an appearance at the performance; for in the morning he found his voice was not in good order, and therefore resolved not to sing; but by the persuasion of the friends with whom he was staying, he was induced, notwithstanding his fears, to fulfil his engagement. Whether or not the music suited him better than he imagined, it is very certain that it seemed to have a most salutary effect upon his voice; for at the performance he never sang more beautifully.

[*Photograph by H. Whitlock & Son*

Sir William Cusins.
Sir Sterndale Bennett.
P. Sainton.
Dr. W. H. Cummings.
Sir Julius Benedict.
Sir Michael Costa.
Sims Reeves.
John Francis Barnett.
Madame Patey.
Madame Lemmens-Sherrington.
Charles Santley.
Mr. Stimpson.
Mlle. Titiens.
Christine Nillson.
Madame Sainton-Dolby.
W. H. Weiss.

Mr. Santley gave a wonderful reading of the baritone music, and one could almost imagine, whilst listening to him, that it was the Ancient Mariner himself telling us of his supernatural and mysterious voyage. Titiens in the soprano solo and chorus, "This seraph band," sang divinely, so pure were her notes; and justified the opinion formed by all who heard her, that hers was the grandest soprano voice of the nineteenth century. The C sharp in alt, which she reached in the concluding notes of the cantata, seemed to soar above the great orchestra and chorus in a truly wonderful manner.

Never had the Birmingham Town Hall been more crowded than it was on the occasion of the first performance of the cantata,[1] nor could the audience have been more sympathetic in their reception of a new composition. During the progress of the work, which I conducted, I felt quite calm and collected, and was able to keep the grand forces I had command over under perfect control.

Even now, after so many years, the recollection of my first appearance at this Festival comes before me with lifelike reality. I well remember the feeling of suspense I experienced whilst waiting my turn to ascend the platform. I recall, too, the warm greeting with which the audience welcomed me, as well as the glow of excitement I felt when

[1] This took place at the evening concert of the Festival on 29 August, 1867.

I saw before me the grand chorus and orchestra of a Birmingham Festival.

What a volume of sound is produced by these instruments and choristers, as sonorous and mellow when it swells to some glorious climax, as when subdued to the hush of a *pianissimo*. I had many opportunities of noting these points of excellence, for in addition to Mendelssohn's "Elijah," I heard his less frequently performed oratorio "St. Paul." Then I was present at Handel's "Israel in Egypt" and his "Alexander's Feast." Benedict's "Legend of St. Cecilia" was also given, and was conducted by its composer. This struck me as being his finest work. Sterndale Bennett's "Woman of Samaria" quite fulfilled the expectations I formed of it when I heard it in rehearsal. Although Bennett was present, the work was conducted by W. G. Cusins, and it made a great impression. The "Messe Solennelle"—one of the first compositions that brought Gounod to the notice of the English public—found a prominent place in the programme.

The kindness and attention I received during this Festival is stamped indelibly upon my memory. The members of the Committee vied with one another in their generous hospitality.

CHAPTER VIII

AMONG THE CHORAL SOCIETIES

IN the ensuing season—1868—of the Crystal Palace, "The Ancient Mariner" was included in the programme of one of the Saturday concerts. The cantata was also performed that same year at St. James's Hall, with a chorus selected principally from the Crystal Palace choir and the Handel Festival chorus. This, together with an orchestra which numbered upwards of eighty performers, I found almost too large for the platform of the hall. The chorus took up so much room that it was with considerable difficulty that the instrumentalists could be squeezed in.

My cousins, Clara and Rosamund, the talented daughters of John Barnett, of whom I have already spoken, sang the soprano and contralto music very charmingly. It was their first appearance in London after their return from Italy, where they had been singing in opera under the *nom de plume* of "Doria." This name they retained at their début, and they were known in

the musical world as the Sisters Doria. The baritone part was on this occasion taken by Mr. Lewis Thomas.

The cantata was also included in the programme of the Worcester Festival of that year, when Titiens again sang the soprano solos.

It is indeed gratifying to know that my "Ancient Mariner" has been given, at some time or another, by all the leading choral societies throughout the land, and that it is still in as great request as ever.

Fortunately for the composers of cantatas and works of a similar character, there are few towns that do not possess a choral society; nay, even villages seem able to collect voices in sufficient numbers to form a chorus. For where there is a church there will be sure to be an amateur choir, membership of which becomes sought after to such a degree that the village schoolroom has to be utilized for rehearsals, and thus the local choral society buds forth into existence. As a rule, the organist of the church is the conductor, and he finds that the rehearsals, for which he voluntarily gives his services, vary the monotony of his duties at the church and elsewhere. Then, not only are sacred works practised, but the secular cantata is introduced, and in due time performances are given for such praiseworthy objects as the repairing of the church or the purchasing of a new organ.

The love of choral singing is a healthy sign in our national character, and one that should be encouraged by all who value musical art.

As I have been frequently called upon to conduct performances of my "Ancient Mariner," I have with that object visited many important musical centres, such as Nottingham, Lincoln, and Liverpool. At the last-named city I conducted a fine performance of the cantata at the Liverpool Philharmonic, where it has since, more than once, been placed in the programme of that representative society.

Sometimes I have been invited to be present at performances of the work.

I recollect hearing it at one of the concerts of the Highbury Philharmonic. It had on that occasion the advantage of being conducted by that accomplished and erudite musician, Dr. (now Sir Frederick) Bridge. With the fine choir and excellent orchestra at the disposal of the conductor, it can readily be imagined that a perfect rendering of the cantata was a foregone conclusion. Then, too, among the solo singers was Edward Lloyd, who sang "Down dropt the Breeze" with exquisite pathos; whilst the silvery tones of his voice in "The Harbour Bay" sounded, indeed, "as clear as glass."

Another performance of the work occurs to my

memory. This took place a year or two after its production at the Birmingham Festival. The performance itself was on a small scale, but indirectly it gave me an opportunity of being introduced to one of the most prominent men in the literary world. It was at the little town or village of Crawley, on the Brighton line, that the cantata was given, and after the concert, I went with my friend Mr. Frank Romer to the house of Mark Lemon, who lived close by, where I found quite a family party assembled. We all spent a merry evening, and it did me good to see how sympathetically Mark Lemon entered into the enjoyment of his children and their friends. The then editor of "Punch" was a portly and striking figure, almost patriarchal in his appearance. One of his daughters was married to a son of Frank Romer, so that the two families were on very intimate terms.

It may here incidentally be mentioned that Mr. Frank Romer was a partner in the firm of Hutchings and Romer, who originally published my "Ancient Mariner." In later years it was acquired by the firm of Novello & Co. who brought out a full score of the cantata.

CHAPTER IX

"PARADISE AND THE PERI"

THE next work I wrote after the "Ancient Mariner" was my "Ouverture Symphonique," which I dedicated to the Philharmonic Society of London, and it was produced at one of their concerts on 11 May, 1868. I named it "Ouverture Symphonique" as I considered the music to be symphonic in character. This overture was again performed by the Philharmonic Society on 28 May, 1891, the same concert at which Paderewski made his second appearance at this Society.

It was in 1869 that I introduced my Concerto[1] in D Minor at a New Philharmonic concert. This work had been written after a short tour that I took in Wales; I might therefore have called it my Welsh Concerto, as I think the invigorating effect of the Welsh scenery may have influenced me when writing it.

That same year, whilst I was on a visit at

[1] This concerto was likewise performed by my sister, Emma Barnett, at one of the Saturday Concerts at the Crystal Palace.

Tunbridge Wells during the summer holidays, I received a letter from Mr. Richard Peyton, who was then the chairman of the Orchestral Committee of the Birmingham Festival, asking me whether I had a new cantata ready, as the committee was desirous of having another work of mine for the festival of 1870. Unfortunately, I had nothing then available; I wrote, therefore, in reply, that I believed I should be able to write a cantata in time for the festival, and would, later on, give particulars as to the subject I would select.

The choice of subject proved to be a difficult problem to me. There was, as in the case of the Festival of 1867, no time for me to have a libretto written specially, as it was the holiday season, when it would have been wellnigh impossible to have communicated with any author likely to have furnished me with the words for a cantata. I had not come across any illustrations of any other poem suggesting a subject, as did Noel Paton's drawings. I accordingly went to one of the best libraries in Tunbridge Wells, and raided nearly all the poetical works it contained. None of those I looked over, many of which I was already conversant with, fulfilled the conditions that I considered essential for a musical work, with the exception of one, and that was Moore's "Paradise

and the Peri." This poem I found admirably suited for musical purposes. There was, however, this objection—that Schumann had written one of his finest works on the same subject. I felt, therefore, I was treading on dangerous ground; but then I recollected that Schumann in writing his fine work had, as a matter of fact, not made use of Moore's words in their integrity; for the libretto to which Schumann allied his music was an adaptation of a German translation of Moore's poems, with many radical alterations and additions.

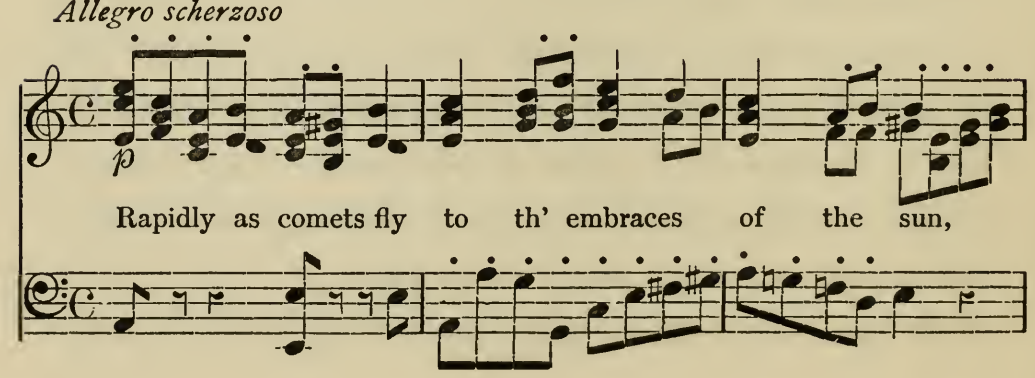
Taking this fact into consideration, I felt that I was fully justified in attempting to write a cantata that would allow the listener to enjoy the beautiful words of this poem as left to us by the Hibernian bard. As to how I should illustrate them musically, that was, when I set about the task, an unknown quantity; but I determined upon making the attempt, whether I succeeded or failed. In this spirit I at once took the matter earnestly in hand, and looked over the words with a view to their musical possibilities.

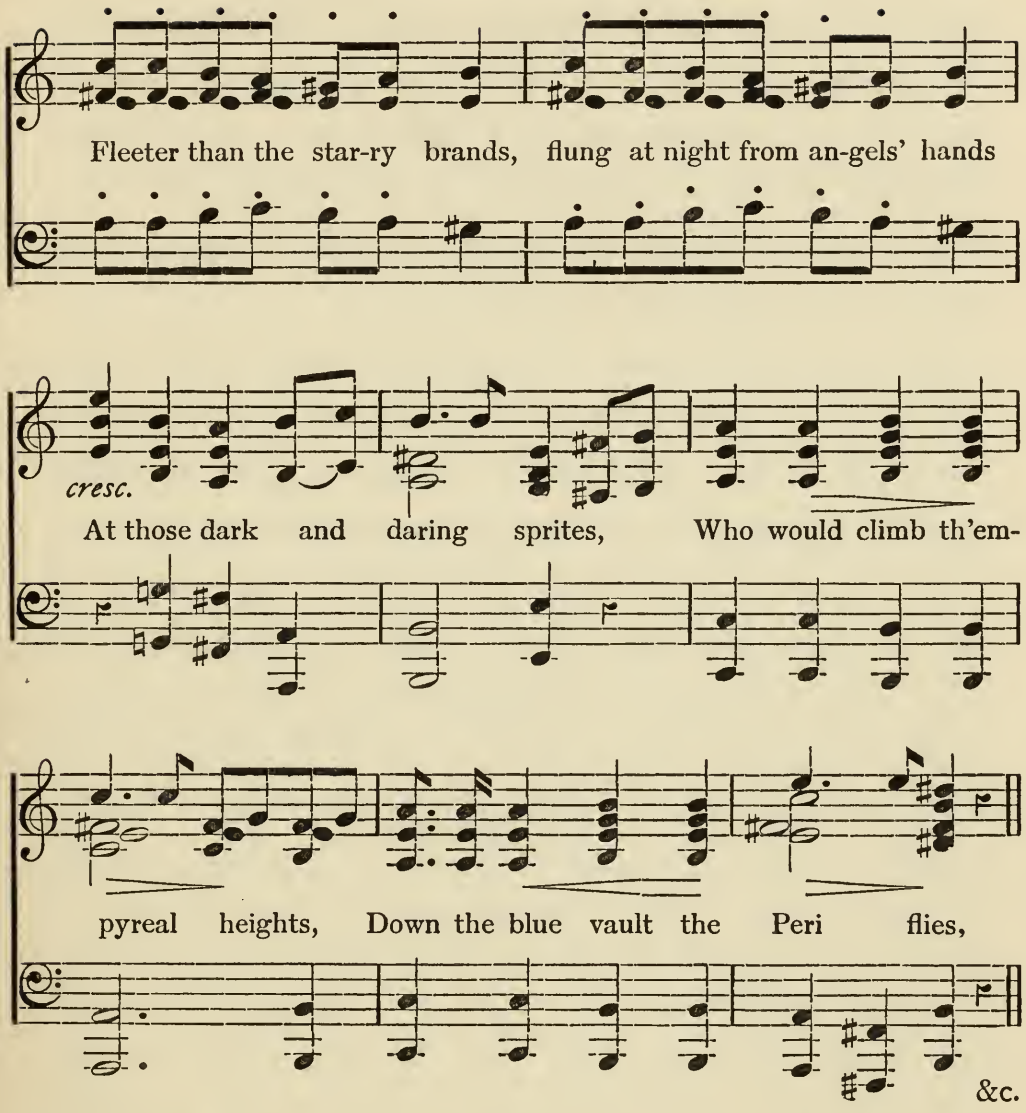
As we were leaving Tunbridge Wells for Brighton, I delayed commencing the cantata until I arrived at the latter town, and meanwhile endeavoured to imbue myself thoroughly with the spirit of Moore's poem.

I had for some time previously been giving

myself a rest from composition, so that when I commenced working at the new cantata I found I was somewhat out of practice. However, facility was soon regained, and I was able to bring back with me on my return to London two or three numbers in sketch.

The time I had at my disposal for completing my "Paradise and the Peri," although a month or two longer than I had given me for composing my "Ancient Mariner," was none too long; it was therefore highly important for me to avoid any delay whilst engaged on the work. Nevertheless, on more than one occasion delays did occur which might have proved dangerous. For example, I lost a good deal of time writing a chorus to the words, "Rapidly as comets fly to th' embraces of the sun," and then, when I had nearly finished it, I changed my mind and thought it would be better to omit these words altogether. It may be here not without interest to give a few bars of the music I intended introducing at this point, which I accordingly subjoin.




Fleeter than the star-ry brands, flung at night from an-gels' hands
cresc.
At those dark and daring sprites, Who would climb th'em-
pyreal heights, Down the blue vault the Peri flies,
&c.

On another occasion, when I endeavoured to find a theme for the contralto solo, "Nymph of a fair but erring line," it seemed as if my ideas had run dry; nothing would come. Day after day I sought for a theme, but without success. Then it occurred to me that a country walk might act as a stimulant to my ideas. Accordingly, I took the train to Hampstead and made my way to the

highest point of the heath, where, aided by a fine September afternoon, I enjoyed a glorious view of the surrounding country, with the gorse and heather of the heath itself as a foreground. This view I shall never see again as I saw it then; for West Hampstead, Brondesbury, and other off-shoots of the great metropolis were then non-existent. On arriving home, I made another attempt for a theme, and found that I had not over-estimated the salutary effects of country air and rural scenes; in fact, a melody came to me quite easily, so that I was able to finish the aria that very evening. A similar delay occurred later on in the work, that is to say, in the middle of the chorus, "But morn is blushing in the sky." Here again I felt I wanted a stimulus to my ideas, and as it was then winter, and Nature was not available, I had recourse to the sister art of painting, and spent an hour or so at the National Gallery. On arriving home, I found no difficulty in fitting music to the words, "And she already hears the trees Of Eden with their crystal bells."

The most serious loss of time that occurred during the writing of my work was in connexion with the finale.

I had considerable difficulty in evolving an appropriate theme for the words "Joy, joy for ever!" and after discarding several melodies that

had occurred to me, I thought of one that I had sketched out some years previously. As the melody was of a distinctive character, I tested it as to the possibility of allying it to the words just quoted, and was glad to find that it suited them excellently. Consequently I decided upon adopting this theme, and proceeded without interruption with the finale, until I arrived at the verse, "My feast is now of the Tuba tree." At this point I came to a dead stop. In vain I tried to invent anything that satisfied me. I lost several days in futile attempts, and as it was then about the middle of April preceding the Festival, every day lost was most serious. I thought, perhaps, a visit to the seaside would do some good; but I did not go far, only to Southend-on-Sea, which at that time was little more than a village. I engaged some rooms in Prittlewell Square, hired the best piano obtainable, and there and then renewed my attack upon the interrupted finale, but, unfortunately, with no better results. At last it occurred to me that it would be advisable to find another theme, and discard altogether what I had written. Accordingly, I set to work the same evening and wrote an entirely new finale, from beginning to end, getting over the difficulty of the words alluded to—"My feast is now of the Tuba tree"—quite easily.

I played it over to my father and mother, for they had accompanied me to Southend. They approved of what I had done, so that I retired to rest in a contented frame of mind, feeling that I had come to the end of my difficulties. The following morning, on playing the new theme again, I found I did not like it nearly so well as the first one I had chosen, although the latter portion of what I had just written satisfied me. Then it occurred to me: Could I not use this latter portion, and link it to the original melody?

I discovered to my great joy that this was quite practicable. And thus, in this circuitous manner, I tided over the difficulty that had so long stood in my way in finishing the work.

This enabled me to complete the vocal score and place it in the publishers' hands, so that it might be brought out in time for the Festival. I was especially glad of this, as the Princess of Wales, now our Empress Queen, had graciously consented to accept the dedication of the cantata.

Owing to the delays incurred in writing the music, I was not able to supply the choral parts of the entire work for the earlier rehearsals of the Festival Choir; and therefore at first sent in as much as I could possibly get ready, forwarding the remainder to Birmingham a week or two after.

One of the choral rehearsals that I went down to Birmingham to conduct was somewhat spoilt through a mistake I made in regard to the date. I had duly entered it in my pocket-book, but instead of consulting my memorandum I foolishly depended upon my memory. The result was, that when I arrived at Mr. Richard Peyton's house at Edgbaston, where I always stayed on such occasions, I found, to my disappointment, that he was away from home. I thought it very strange that he had apparently forgotten that I was coming, and could not divine the cause of his absence. There was nothing else to be done but for me to find out what was amiss; I consequently drove to Mr. Stockley's house, when I learnt from him that I had arrived a week sooner than I was expected. However, he told me there was a rehearsal of the Festival Chorus that evening; but he said that the attendance would not be so good as it would have been the following week, as the choristers always appear in greater force when they expect the composer to be present.

The solo numbers of my new cantata were allotted to Mademoiselle Titiens, Madame Patey, Mr. Vernon Rigby, and Signor Foli.

Titiens took quite as much pains with my "Paradise and the Peri" as she did with my "Ancient Mariner"; and it was indeed a treat to

me to hear the soprano music of my new cantata sung with such beauty of tone.

Foli taking the bass solos gave me an opportunity of making the acquaintance of that fine artist. I found him very genial, and, although he was an Irishman, quite American in his way of speaking, added to which he had a certain easy-going manner with him that made me feel at once at home with him.

What a grand voice he had, and how fortunate I felt in having such an artist at my command!

The music describing the plague he sang with so much energy that one experienced a feeling akin to awe whilst listening to him.

During the Festival week I was not merely content with the part that devolved upon me in connexion with my "Paradise and the Peri," but went to all the other performances, both morning and evening. I heard Sullivan's "Overture di Ballo," which was produced for the first time, and which proved to be a great success.

I likewise heard Ferdinand Hiller's well-wrought cantata, "Nala and Damayanti," conducted by its composer.

The memory of this distinguished musician will ever be associated with the pathetic scene he witnessed at the death-bed of Beethoven, when the great tone poet in his last moments held out the

hand of reconciliation to a brother composer, Hummel, from whom he had been estranged for many years.

I was glad to have an opportunity during the Festival of making the acquaintance of such a sterling composer as Ferdinand Hiller. He was a portly-looking man, with a kindly manner that at once made me feel at ease with him, and I quite understood how it was that he was simply adored by all the students of the Cologne Conservatorium. He has left some charming little sketches for the pianoforte, such as his "Zur Guitarre," but his larger works are now seldom performed—with the exception of his Concerto in F sharp minor, which was introduced at the Crystal Palace Concerts for the first time by Franklin Taylor.

As to my "Paradise and the Peri," the performance of which took place on 30 August, 1870, I should have been indeed hard to please, had I not been more than gratified with the superb manner in which orchestra, chorus, and soloists rendered the work. Among the numbers which were encored was the unaccompanied quartet, "She wept, the air grew pure," which went to perfection. In the second quartet, "But hark the Vesper call to Prayer," where the sound of a bell is supposed to be heard, I have lately introduced into the score an orchestral bell, in order to give a more realistic

effect to this important episode in the cantata. As performed at the Festival, I relied entirely upon imitating the bell effect by reiterated notes of the horns.

During the ensuing season of the Crystal Palace Concerts, my new cantata was performed; Madame Vanzini taking the soprano, Madame Patey the contralto, and Vernon Rigby the tenor. Santley, who took the bass solos, never sang with greater effect than he did on this occasion. He threw so much soul and fervour into the aria, "Blest tears of soul-felt penitence," that it was irresistibly encored. I was glad to have among the audience August Manns, the conductor of the Palace Concerts, he having insisted upon my taking the baton at this performance.

The same season, later in the summer, my "Paradise and the Peri" was given at St. James's Hall, when the late Madame Lemmens-Sherrington took the soprano solos.

In 1871 it was included in the programme of the Worcester Festival. Some years later I conducted a performance of it at Cambridge during Commemoration week. At this concert one of the recitatives, which is accompanied by wood wind instruments alone, was spoilt owing to the performers of these instruments having been detained at a flower-show, where they had been

playing, and consequently arrived somewhat late during the progress of my work. The result was that during a recitative the unfortunate tenor had to vocalise for several bars without accompaniment, until, at last, I took compassion upon him and sang the bassoon part myself, imitating as far as was in my power the tones of that useful instrument. Whether in so doing I did more harm than good to the effect, I cannot say.

On another occasion I had an opportunity of hearing the cantata performed by the Bath Philharmonic. That accomplished musician, Mr. Alfred Visetti, was then the conductor of this society, and had put my "Paradise and the Peri" into rehearsal for one of the concerts; when, owing to illness, he found himself unable to go on with the practising of the choir. He consequently asked me to undertake that duty. At the concert the work was received by the audience with much favour. On leaving Bath the following morning, I carried away very pleasant recollections of the bright voices of the choir, and not a little satisfaction at having heard my cantata rendered in so efficient a manner.

CHAPTER X

"THE GOOD SHEPHERD" AND FIRST ORCHESTRAL SUITE

IN 1873 I produced my "Raising of Lazarus" at one of the New Philharmonic Concerts, but of this I will speak later on.

My next choral work was "The Good Shepherd," which I wrote at very short notice for Mr. Kuhe's Brighton Festival of 1876. When asked to contribute a work to this Festival, I had one chorus and an aria ready by me, which formed a kind of nucleus for writing the cantata. The aria was composed to the well-known words of the Psalmist, "The Lord is my Shepherd," and was written in 1873, not long before a serious illness fell upon me. During the time that I was ill I often thought of the beautiful words of this aria, so replete with consolation to one as near to "the valley of the shadow of death" as I was then. The thought indeed sometimes came to me: Should I ever live to make use of the aria in some musical work? On being restored to

health, I made a resolution that, whenever occasion offered, I would incorporate it in some sacred composition. And thus it was that, when I received the commission from Mr. Kuhe, I eagerly embraced this opportunity of carrying out the resolution I had formed three years previously.

I thought it wise to place the writing of the libretto of the "Good Shepherd" in experienced hands, and therefore called upon Mr. Joseph Bennett, the accomplished musical critic of the "Daily Telegraph," to ask him whether he would undertake to write the words for my sacred cantata. He most kindly consented to do so; and I was glad to find that he thoroughly approved of the choice of subject. The words he selected from Scripture, with the exception of the hymn, "Gentle Shepherd, see us wand'ring," which he wrote specially for the work. I found the libretto he furnished me with admirably adapted for music, and, with such sympathetic material to work upon, I was able to get the cantata finished in good time for the Festival.

Among the solo singers who took part in the work at the performance were Madame Lemmens-Sherrington, Madame Antoinette Sterling, and Edward Lloyd. The latter artist sang the tenor solo, "I have gone astray," with such genuine pathos that it was encored.

A year or two after the production of my "Good Shepherd"[1] the Brighton Festival gave my "Ancient Mariner," and I was asked to conduct it. At the rehearsal an unwelcome surprise was in store for me. When the finale was in progress, I found, to my consternation, that the 'celli and contra-bassi were not playing. I stopped the orchestra, and inquired the cause of this strange omission. I was told that the orchestral parts of these instruments were imperfect, the finale having been omitted altogether. One of these parts having been handed to me to see, I discovered that, by some accident, the printer had omitted the finale altogether. As the performance was in the evening, no time was to be lost; so I had all these imperfect parts sent to me at the hotel where I was staying, and proceeded to copy out the missing number by the aid of my score. It was as much as I could do to get the parts ready in time for the performance.

. . . . . .

In writing these reminiscences, I do not always describe the events of my life in chronological order, but rather put them down as they occur to my memory. Therefore, finding I have forgotten to allude to the production of my first orchestral

[1] A few years ago I thought it advisable to revise this sacred cantata, and for this purpose an entirely new edition of it has been published.

suite, I may be pardoned if I say a few words about it; although the work was really written and produced two years before my "Good Shepherd."

Some of the members of the Philharmonic of Liverpool having decided upon giving a festival, their proposition was eventually carried out, with the result that a musical festival at the great city of commerce was inaugurated in 1874. Benedict was appointed conductor, and I was selected as one of the composers commissioned to write for the occasion. The work I contributed to the programme was my orchestral Suite, the "Lay of the Last Minstrel," describing four episodes in Sir Walter Scott's poem. This Suite was produced in October, 1874.

During this Festival I stayed at the house of Mr. A. F. Eggers, who, if I recollect rightly, was the chairman of the Festival Committee. At his house I met one evening Madame Adelina Patti, who was one of the artists engaged for the Festival. I found her as charming in society as she was fascinating on the operatic stage. During the evening I played to her my Fantasie for Pianoforte that I had written on themes from my "Ancient Mariner," and she was very much taken with it.

At the rehearsal of my "Lay of the Last Minstrel" I was glad that the orchestral effects

came out just as I intended. Ludwig Straus, who led the first violins, told me afterwards that he liked the musical colouring by which I have sought to convey the impression that one might have in visiting Fair Melrose "by the pale moonlight" and hearing in imagination the weird chant of the monks of old.

The kindly reception the suite met with at the Festival performance was fully endorsed by the manner in which the audience welcomed it not many months after at the Crystal Palace Concerts. It was likewise introduced to the audience of the Philharmonic Society of London at the second concert of the season of 1877.

CHAPTER XI

"THE RAISING OF LAZARUS"

I WILL here take an opportunity of saying a few words about my "Raising of Lazarus," the first performance of which at the New Philharmonic Concerts I have already referred to. This work was not the result of any commission for a festival, but was commenced even before I went to study at Leipsic; indeed, portions of what I had done I took with me to Germany. Other parts I wrote in Leipsic, notably the opening introduction and chorus, which was performed in the Gewandhaus. The chorus on this occasion consisted of students from the Conservatorium assisted by the choir of the Thomas Kirche. At one of the rehearsals an opportunity was afforded me of hearing a wonderful feat in choral sight-singing. It had been arranged between the Cantor, Dr. Hauptmann, and myself, that the chorus should be rehearsed by the members of the Thomas Kirche choir, previous to the general rehearsal. Accordingly, on the morning fixed

upon, I went, taking with me the choral parts. As the composition was in MS., it was absolutely impossible that the members of the choir could ever have seen it. I expected that they would have found it tough work in the way of choral singing, the music being very contrapuntal and in many parts elaborate in construction. What then was my surprise to hear it sung faultlessly, and with the greatest amount of spirit. If it had been in rehearsal for six weeks it could not have gone better.

Speaking about the Thomas Kirche, reminds me how, when a student at Leipsic, I used frequently to go to this church in the afternoon in order to listen to the Psalms and Motets of Bach, for the singing of which the choir was justly celebrated. But the greatest treat of all was to hear Bach's Passion Music performed there.

This performance, which takes place annually on Good Friday, is looked forward to in Leipsic as one of the great events of the year. The wonderfully effective way in which Bach's masterpiece is rendered on these occasions is, no doubt, due to the manner in which the *tempi* and light and shade are managed, in accordance with the traditions that have been handed down to the cantors of the Thomas Kirche since the time of Bach himself. One point struck me greatly, on account

THE THOMAS KIRCHE, LEIPSIC

(WHERE SEBASTIAN BACH WAS CANTOR)

of the fine combination of tone produced. This occurs in the opening chorus. The boys who sing the chorale, while elaborate counterpoint is in progress, stand apart in the gallery of the church, and their voices seem to soar above the rest of the chorus like a celestial choir joining in with those who are on the earth below.

The Gewandhaus orchestra co-operates in these annual performances, and on the two occasions that I was present the conductor was Julius Rietz.

I may here incidentally mention that I was among the audience at the first performance of Bach's Passion Music in England, which was given by the Bach Society at St. James's Hall, and conducted by Sterndale Bennett. Unfortunately, the rendering of the work was marred by want of sufficient rehearsal. Just before the performance, one of my former fellow-students at the Royal Academy of Music, the late Henry Baumer, who was taking part in the chorus, came round to me and warned me that I must not be surprised if the chorus was very "shaky"; for, he said, the only rehearsal at which all the members had attended was the one immediately preceding the concert. So the greater portion of the chorus must have been singing Bach's difficult work after having been only once through it. A good performance under these circumstances was impossible. The

redeeming feature, however, was the singing of Sims Reeves. Even in Leipsic I had never heard the music allotted to the Narrator sung with such depth of feeling and beauty of voice.

In regard to my "Raising of Lazarus," I continued the composition of this oratorio on my settling in London, and worked at it on and off, whenever I had time at my disposal. For the New Philharmonic concert I made considerable change and revision in the music, and in its new form it was published and dedicated to an old friend and patron of mine, the late Mr. George Norbury, whose brother, Mr. John Norbury, is now the esteemed treasurer of the Royal College of Organists, and to whom I have dedicated these memoirs.

A few years after the first performance it was included in the programme of the Hereford Festival of 1876, the solo singers being Mademoiselle Titiens, Madame Trebelli, Mr. W. H. Cummings, and Mr. Lewis Thomas.

As in the case of my other works for festivals, I went through the solo parts with the singers engaged, and in this way made the acquaintance of Madame Trebelli, who lived nearly opposite to my house in Marlborough Place, St. John's Wood, where I was then living. I found her charming; and she was evidently most interested in the music

she had to sing in my oratorio. It was a wonderful voice she had; for the middle and lower notes contained all the richness of a fine contralto, whilst in the upper register she could hold her own with any soprano as regards compass. In "Carmen" she was perfection; indeed, all who heard her in that ever-green opera were unanimous in considering her representation of the passionate gipsy as being truly wonderful as a specimen of realistic acting.

I was very glad to have Mr. W. H. Cummings for the tenor solo in this work; for with such a true artist and accomplished musician one always feels safe.

Mr. Lewis Thomas as bass possessed just the voice suited to the music given to Lazarus; his rich and sonorous tones imparting depth of character to the sacred words he was singing.

It should be here stated, in explanation, that in the construction of the libretto of my oratorio I have given a part to Lazarus, both before his death and after his being raised to life.

The narrative of this great miracle, as related by the evangelist, although it leaves a record of the words spoken by Martha and Mary, containing some of the most beautiful religious aspirations to be found in the New Testament, does not give any account of those that may have been uttered by Lazarus. In the libretto of the oratorio suitable

words, selected from Holy Scripture, have been allotted to the bass voice, as being spoken by Lazarus.

It is, perhaps, of interest to remark here, that several years after I had arranged the words of my "Raising of Lazarus," I came across Schubert's "Lazarus," the existence of which, at the time I was writing my oratorio, I was not aware of. I found that, by a remarkable coincidence, Schubert had gone upon the same plan that I have in creating a part for Lazarus, in order to make the subject more available for musical treatment.

At the rehearsal in the cathedral an unwelcome surprise was in store for me. Just after the dying song of Lazarus there is a chorale for organ alone. When the organist commenced this it was found that the instrument was more than a quarter of a tone lower than the orchestra. On inquiring, I was told it had been tuned down at Mr. Sims Reeves' request; for at that time he had been agitating for the introduction of the French normal pitch into England, but found that there were difficulties in the way of this change being carried out—difficulties which even now cannot always be surmounted.

The impracticability of the orchestra lowering its pitch without sufficient preparation was fully proved on this occasion, for on my asking if it

were possible for the wind instruments to be adjusted so as to be in tune with the organ, I was informed that it could not be done, as lower than a certain pitch they would not go.

As it was impossible to dispense with the organ in my oratorio, it was arranged that the instrument should be tuned up to its original pitch, so that it could be used with the orchestra, and thus a contretemps was avoided.

At the performance, my "Raising of Lazarus" was given without any interval between Parts I and II, so that it formed in its entirety the first part of the morning service.

This made rather a long part, and I expect must have taxed severely the performers' capacity for endurance. The choir especially must have felt it, as there are a large number of choruses, many of them being of considerable length.

It was, indeed, a great ordeal for my choir to have passed through, and it bore unmistakable evidence as to the sterling material of which the Hereford Festival Choir was composed; for not only were there no signs of fatigue on the part of the choristers, but their intonation was true throughout.

How fortunate I felt in having the choruses sung by such fresh and beautiful voices, amid the impressive surroundings of the sacred edifice!

I remember, too, how warmly Sainton, the leader of the orchestra, congratulated me after the performance. What a genial Frenchman he was, his face beaming with good nature. I recollect full well the pleasure with which, on several occasions, I heard him in Spohr's Violin Concertos, especially the one in E, which is rarely heard now.

At the Hereford Festival which I am describing, Sainton, at one of the evening concerts, undertook more than his duties as leader of the first violins required of him. This was when Titiens was singing a scena from an Italian opera, in which she introduced, as was then customary, numerous ornaments and cadenzas, and with which Townshend Smith, the conductor of the Festival, was not familiar. It was therefore scarcely to be wondered at, that, not knowing what the *prima donna* was doing or going to do, Townshend Smith should have felt rather abroad in directing the orchestra. Fortunately, Sainton was equal to the occasion. For I noticed that the great French violinist quietly, and I may say almost slyly, left off playing and commenced indicating the parts of the bar with his bow, so as to keep the singer and orchestra together. The latter knowing that Sainton was familiar with the alterations in the music made by the fair singer, took the time from his bow, instead of from Townshend Smith. It was indeed comi-

cal to see Sainton's bow giving a down beat, whilst the conductor's baton was indicating an up beat.

What a charming man was Townshend Smith, so amiable and sympathetic. He was a great lover of Spohr, and I understood always included some work by that composer in the Festival programme.

I ought not to omit to mention a very excellent performance of the "Raising of Lazarus" which took place at the Reading Philharmonic, under the direction of Mr. W. Strickland, but I have forgotten the year in which it occurred.

CHAPTER XII

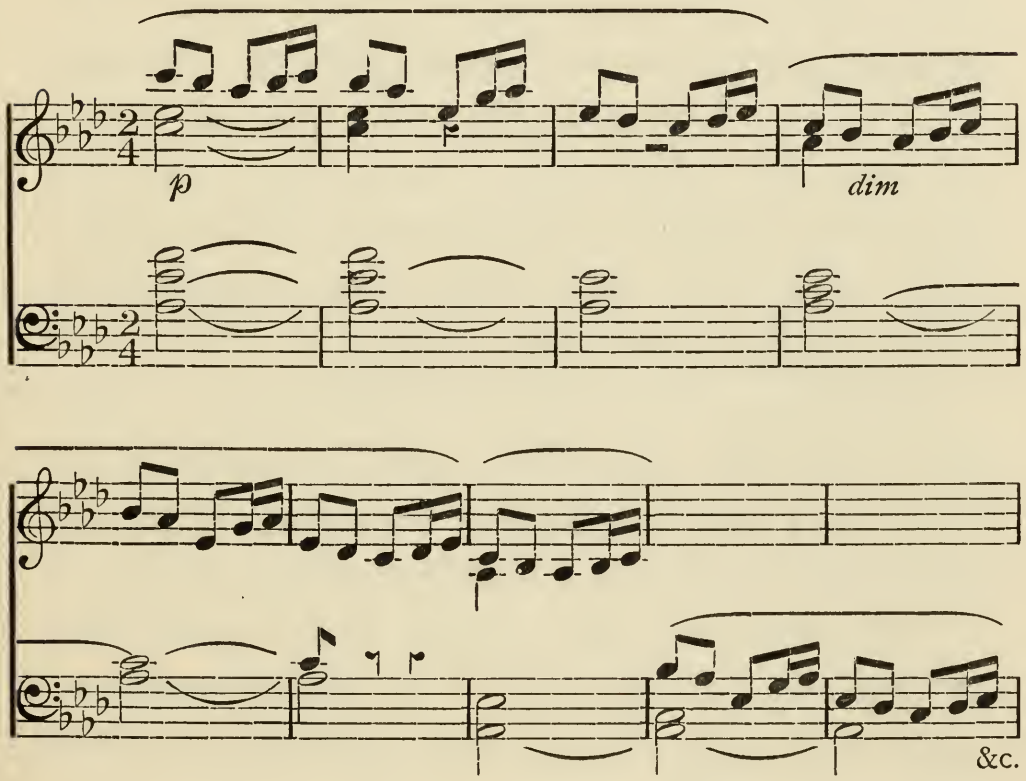
CHAMBER MUSIC—JANSA AND BEETHOVEN —THE LESLIE CHOIR

A CONSIDERABLE interval of time elapsed between the production of my "Good Shepherd" and my next choral work, "The Building of the Ship."

Nevertheless, it must not be supposed that meanwhile I had given up composition. For during those years I wrote a great number of pianoforte pieces, the most important being my Sonata in E Minor, which was introduced some years ago at a pianoforte recital given by my sister, Miss Emma Barnett.

I had already written a Sonata in C Minor when I was studying with Julius Rietz at Leipsic. And here I may allude to the fact that Rietz, although inclined to be very sharp in his manner and caustic in his remarks, would occasionally indulge in a joke. It was true that the joke was too frequently at the expense of one of his pupils. An instance of this occurred during one of his lessons, at which

I had brought the slow movement of the sonata alluded to for him to see. He was playing it through just as I had written it, until he arrived at the final page, where the following phrase of three bars occurs:—



The phrase as it stood in my composition was repeated three times, the repetition being taken an octave lower each time. This mode of proceeding Rietz evidently objected to; and, in order to emphasize his opinion, as well as to show up the weakness of the device, he persistently went on repeating my poor little phrase, and each time in an octave lower, until he had descended into the

lowest depths of the bass and no more notes were left. The result was a laugh from all present in the class against me, which no one enjoyed more thoroughly than Rietz himself.

This sonata I thought a great deal of at the time; but on looking it over again some years subsequently, I decided not to publish it. I went, therefore, on the principle of "write and burn," although the latter part of the precept I did not carry out, as there is often a feeling, after destroying a composition, that perhaps there might have been something in it worth keeping.

This brings to my mind a conversation I had with John Ella, when I was quite a young man, in regard to a work of mine that I had just completed, and which I told him I contemplated publishing.

His advice was not perhaps of the most comforting kind. For he said: "You young composers want to publish everything as soon as you have written it. Write and burn, until you have produced something worth keeping."

Having incidentally brought in the name of John Ella, a few words about this remarkable man may not be out of place. As the founder of the Musical Union, he did much good work in the interest of chamber music in England, especially in aristocratic circles; but it is a question as to whether these concerts had the effect of popular-

izing this form of art with the million. This was left for the Monday Popular Concerts to achieve. John Ella was a man who made it quite a business to ingratiate himself with members of the aristocracy; and let it be said that in this respect he was eminently successful. He seemed to be hand in glove with dukes and lords, and was, perhaps, not a little fond of speaking about the big-wigs he came in contact with. Thus he succeeded in bringing together the most aristocratic audience that has ever attended the performances of a series of chamber concerts within my recollection. As a musician, Ella would probably not have taken the first rank. He commenced his career as second violin in the orchestra; not that this fact would prove him to be deficient as a musician, for the playing of an inner part has special difficulties as to time not so frequently met with in an upper part.

In society, however, John Ella was in his element, for he had most of the qualifications necessary for rendering him popular with the upper classes. His appearance was in a way commanding. He had an intellectual forehead, a special characteristic of his face being what is termed a beetling brow.

At the concerts of the Musical Union, he was always in evidence, and each season he succeeded

in bringing forward some new artist of continental reputation. Amongst these may be mentioned Wilhelmina Clauss, a pianist who charmed London by her refined and artistic performances.

At Willis's Rooms, where these concerts were held, the platform was placed nearly in the centre; an arrangement that gave to the concerts the air of a social *matinée*, and likewise afforded an opportunity of the music being heard to equal advantage in every part of the room.

It would seem that, at this period, there was an all-abiding desire on the part of the musical public to hear and become familiar with the masterpieces of the great composers in chamber music. For at the same time that Ella's Musical Union was in full swing there was in existence another series of concerts of chamber music, called the Réunion des Arts, under the direction of Charles Goffrie, who played the viola part in the quartets performed, and who is still living, I have been told, somewhere in America.

One of the most notable exponents of quartet music about this time was the violinist Jansa, whom I remember often meeting before going to Leipsic. My recollection of him is all the more interesting from his associations with Beethoven.

When a young man, Jansa, who was a well-known and accomplished violinist, had the unique

privilege of playing the first violin part of Beethoven's quartets at that immortal composer's house, even before they had been published. As these trial performances always took place in Beethoven's presence, one can picture to oneself the intense interest Jansa and his colleagues must have felt, as Beethoven handed to them the parts of a new quartet just fresh from his pen. Beethoven was not deaf then; so that Jansa often used to tell how the great composer would sit in a corner of the room, as far as possible from the players—no doubt more fully to judge of the effects produced. He sat, as Jansa told us, with his head bent forward, as it were in contemplation, and his arms crossed on his chest, listening to the effect of his own creations; and then, if there happened to be some mistake in one of the parts, he would rush across the room and stop the quartet players and make the necessary correction.

I am therefore glad, and I may say proud, that I had the opportunity of meeting with one who had the privilege of being on such intimate terms with Beethoven as Jansa had been; for had I not shaken the same hand that Beethoven had grasped in warmth of gratitude, as he thanked the violinist for the part he had taken in trying over the new quartet?

The history as to the cause which led to Jansa's

domicile in England is not without interest. In the year 1849 he came over from Vienna, where he occupied an important musical post, to fulfil an engagement in London.

About this time there was trouble in Hungary.

The patriot Kossuth had stirred up the people to insurrection, and after the failure of this *émeute*, a number of his followers sought refuge in England to escape the wrath of Austria. Of course, many of them arrived in London almost destitute; so that a concert was got up for the relief of these Hungarian refugees in 1849. At this concert Jansa played, and altogether took a very prominent part in the arrangements. This so offended the Austrian Government that the authorities at Vienna forbade him to return to this city, and his official post was at once cancelled. He became, therefore, from that time forth, an exile from his own country; but as he was greatly attached to England, and had made numerous friends in London, he did not feel his banishment as he otherwise would have done.

It may not be without interest to state that he was Norman Neruda's first teacher of the violin. The present Emperor of Austria also, when a young man, received instruction from him in the "king of instruments."

The advent of the "Monday Pops" to which I have alluded, occurred whilst I was in Germany, so

that I can only speak of the results of what must have been a very excellent start, for when I returned to London I found them flourishing.

Not long after the production of my "Ancient Mariner" I was engaged to play at one of the Monday Popular Concerts, and chose Beethoven's so-called "Waldstein" Sonata. This concert took place on 7 December, 1868.

The late J. W. Davison, who was then musical critic to "The Times," did much towards strengthening the position of the "Monday Pops" with the music-loving public by means of the analytical notes of the music performed, with which he enriched the books of words, as well as by the encouragement he so justly gave to these concerts in the journal for which he wrote.

Davison, in his time, was quite a power in the musical world. Many a young débutant has felt a wave of nervousness come over him on catching sight of this critic in the concert room just before appearing on the platform.

In society, Davison was always "hail fellow well met" and full of wit and humour. He had besides a certain character of manner that was quite his own. I recollect on one occasion, at the house of Madame Laura Baxter, a well-known contralto singer, meeting Carl Formes, the celebrated *basso profondo*, who amused us all by taking off some of

Davison's peculiarities. He imitated Davison's limp in walking so cleverly, that one could quite imagine it was the redoubtable critic himself leaving the room.

During the evening, Formes told us that he was about to appear as Shylock in the "Merchant of Venice." This was rather a surprise to all assembled, because we wondered how he would dispose of his unmistakable German accent. He did not long leave us in suspense as to this, as he volunteered to recite some portion of the dialogue of the vengeful Jew, choosing one of Shylock's most malignant speeches.

I am sorry to say the effect was utterly ludicrous, since Formes' German accent was even more noticeable whilst he was reciting than in his ordinary conversation.

As a singer, in his best days, Formes was celebrated as possessing one of the grandest and deepest bass voices that has ever been heard.

The true bass voice is, more or less, becoming rare, for almost all male singers who are not tenors aim at taking the position of baritones.

I believe it was Santley who made the baritone voice so fashionable; he seemed almost to create it, and thus a great demand arose for baritones, and we all know that if there is a demand for a commodity there will be plenty of it put on the

market. Probably in former times, if a singer had by nature a baritone voice, he would do all he could to bring down his register to that of the true bass.

In one of "Mr. Punch's" humorous sketches there is portrayed a gentleman walking up and down in the park on a very wet day without an umbrella; and on being asked by a friend what can be his object in so doing, he replies, "that he is trying to get hoarse, as he finds that he can then more easily reach the deepest bass notes." Whether any bass singers of the pre-Santley era ever went to such lengths as this, I cannot say; but the fact remains that since the advent of Santley's career baritones have been very much more in evidence.

But, as I was saying when I broke off—Formes' voice was a true bass, possessing an extended compass, for I have heard him take the high F on the second leger-line above the bass clef staff and descend to two octaves below, both being fine notes. He could moreover easily reach the low D below the staff, and with a full volume of tone. His singing of "In dieser hieligen Halle," from "Die Zauberflöte," was something to be remembered; especially the grand way that he descended the notes of the scale from B flat to the E flat below.

Unfortunately, during the latter portion of his career his intonation began to deteriorate, even whilst his voice remained quite fresh; for I recollect hearing him at the opera, when singing an unaccompanied cadenza, getting out of the key altogether; so that I quite dreaded the orchestra coming in with its chord at the end of the cadenza.

This reminds me of a story my father once told me about a celebrated *prima donna* in Costa's time, who, during the performance of an operatic aria, whilst singing a cadenza for voice alone, lost the feeling of the key she was in, so that near the end of it she was quite a semitone lower than when she began. Costa, who saw, or rather heard, what had happened, in order to avoid a musical catastrophe, dexterously gave a sign to the orchestra to transpose the rest of the aria a semitone lower, so that on the re-entrance of the orchestra the singer found herself quite in agreement as regards tonality with the band. Probably, neither she nor the majority of the audience had the slightest idea of anything unusual having taken place.

The tendency of the voice, when unaccompanied, to a gradual lowering of the pitch is a phenomenon well known to conductors of choral music. It seems, in fact, impossible for a large body of choristers, however excellent their voices may be, to sing beyond a certain length of time without

the intonation giving way, unless they are reminded of the pitch by some accompanying instrument; and strange to say, it never goes up, but always down. An unaccompanied part-song or madrigal beginning, say, in E flat, will be sure, by the time it has finished, to conclude in D, if not in a lower key. A curious feature in regard to this fact is, that unless the fall of the voices is very great, or sudden, no one seems to be aware of it.

It is natural that whilst discussing matters concerning unaccompanied choral music my thoughts should revert to the Leslie Choir.

The concerts instituted by Henry Leslie were, undoubtedly, amongst the most enjoyable ever given in St. James's Hall; they were likewise most valuable in introducing to the public one of the most important styles of musical composition—that is to say, unaccompanied choral music. How important a position this class of musical art occupies, may be deduced from the fact that, to a great extent, it was the origin or foundation of modern music; for such composers as Palestrina, Marenzio, and Orlando di Lasso, the pioneers of our art, gave expression to their musical ideas nearly always in the form of unaccompanied choral music. All the best of our early English composers, too, said what they had to say for the most part in madrigals or other forms of music for voices alone.

The Leslie Concerts did, therefore, an untold amount of good in causing this unique and beautiful species of music to become known and appreciated by the public at large.

Among the distinguishing features of the Leslie Choir were the charming *nuances* of light and shade that one noticed in the rendering of the part-songs and madrigals performed. The beauty of tone of the voices was likewise very remarkable; but in the later history of the choir this quality deteriorated to some extent, probably owing to the ageing of the voices of its members.

Henry Leslie was always ready to introduce any new part-song of mine at his concerts.

On one occasion he performed a short madrigal "If I had but two little wings."[1] I think it was when writing to Mr. Leslie to tell him about this madrigal that I was guilty of sending off one of the most absurd specimens of a letter that has ever been posted.

I had nearly finished this letter, when, owing to a mistake I had made in it, I put it aside, intending to rewrite it. I did not do so at once, but began amusing myself by making various little sketches in pen and ink on the margin of the unfinished letter. This by some accident was sent off to Mr. Leslie instead of the one I had

[1] Words by Coleridge.

rewritten. Mr. Leslie must have been highly amused at receiving such an extraordinary epistle, without even a signature. Nevertheless, strange to say, I had an answer from him, in which he said that he had no doubt the letter was from me, as he recognized my handwriting.

I think it was at the same choral practice when my madrigal was rehearsed that I heard a new part-song by Blumenthal on the well-known words of Herrick, "Gather ye rosebuds whilst ye may." Blumenthal himself conducted it, and a very dainty piece of music it proved to be.

At the first performance of all the part-songs of my composition that Mr. Leslie introduced, he very kindly handed the baton to me to conduct them myself.

In the programme of one of the Leslie Concerts, the last in which I took an active part, a well-known amateur flautist, Mr. W. Matthews, was put down for my Concerto Pastorale for Flute.

Mr. Matthews, when a young man, intended to have taken up the flute as a profession, but before doing so he asked the advice of Mr. W. Carte, the father of the late D'Oyly Carte. Mr. Carte's advice was to the effect that, as Mr. Matthews had good business opportunities, it would be wiser for him to give up the idea of becoming a professional flautist. In the end, Mr. Matthews became

a prosperous manufacturer; but he still preserved his love for the flute, and attained such facility of execution on that instrument that he frequently played at important concerts with great success. He had, indeed, a short time previous to this Leslie Concert, given an excellent performance of my Concerto Pastorale in the Town Hall at Birmingham, on which occasion there was a full band.

As there was no orchestra at the Leslie Concert, I was asked to accompany Mr. Matthews on the piano.

Unfortunately this performance had a most disastrous termination.

He had played the first two movements of the concerto with considerable effect; but I noticed that towards the end of the Andante his tone appeared to be getting weaker and weaker, and that he was playing with great effort. I thought, nevertheless, that the rest afforded him by the interlude between the movements would have enabled him to recover himself, instead of which, when he attempted the opening phrase of the last movement, not a note would come. He tried in vain to get even a sound out of his flute, but to no purpose; so after several desperate efforts to awaken music in his instrument he was obliged to abandon the attempt, and we had to retire, leaving the Con-

certo unfinished. The audience, seeing that something unusual had occurred, applauded the unfortunate flautist most warmly.

I was told afterwards by Mr. Radcliffe, the well-known flautist, that this breakdown must have been caused by temporary paralysis of the lips, owing, probably, to extreme nervousness. To me the incident was very painful indeed. I heard some years subsequently that Mr. Matthews had never appeared in public since this concert.

I ought not to omit mentioning that, about a year or two after this occurrence, the Flute Concerto was performed at one of the Covent Garden Promenade Concerts by Mr. Collard, for whom it had been originally written. Owing to circumstances connected with the publishing of this Concerto, copies of it are now very scarce. Perhaps, in consequence of this, a copy of it may in time come to be very valuable!

CHAPTER XIII

OVERTURE TO "A WINTER'S TALE"

I HAVE already alluded to the Ouverture Symphonique that I composed for the Philharmonic. Another orchestral work in this form I wrote in the year 1873 for the British Orchestral Society. This society was started at the initiative of Mr. George Mount, and financed by four or five City men; its object being to show that it was quite possible to have an orchestra of the very first quality, entirely composed of British executants.

The institution of this society was, perhaps, scarcely necessary to prove this fact, for the British orchestral player has always held a high reputation for excellence. It has, indeed, often been remarked that the tone of the strings in our orchestras is even superior to that in orchestras on the Continent. The reason sometimes given for this is, that the violinists in our orchestras, being generally better paid than those abroad, can afford to have instruments that are superior in tone to those possessed

by foreign orchestras. It may not, however, be entirely owing to this cause; but perhaps something may be due to our national physique. It is certainly remarkable that it was said to have been an Englishman who possessed the grandest tone on the violoncello ever thought possible. I allude to the celebrated 'cellist Robert Lindley. According to what I have been told, for his artistic career was before my time, his tone must have equalled in volume two good 'cellists playing in unison. It was, in fact, so remarkable that Piatti and other eminent soloists are said to have interviewed him with the object of finding out the secret of this astonishing amount of tone.

My father knew Robert Lindley well, as he was connected with our family, my uncle John Barnett having married one of Lindley's daughters. When I was a boy I was introduced to the great 'cellist; but I never heard him play, as unfortunately he was then partially paralysed. I could, nevertheless, see from his build that he must have been a very powerful man. He was both tall and well built, and judging from the size of his hands, the 'cello must have felt to him very much as a violin would in smaller hands.

Lindley and the celebrated contra-bassist Dragonitti were, for many years, conspicuous figures in the orchestra at the Royal Italian Opera.

Of course, Lindley was greatly in request at festivals and other musical performances both in town and country. My father often told me a story about him which shows what love Lindley must have had for his instrument.

It happened that on one occasion he was travelling by the stage-coach to fulfil some concert or festival engagement (there were no railways in those days), when the coach was unfortunately overturned. All the passengers were, of course, precipitated into the road, Lindley among the number. Our 'cellist, however, lost no time in searching for his violoncello, and on opening the case was so delighted to find the instrument uninjured, that he seated himself on a bank by the roadside and commenced trying over portions of a concerto, much to the astonishment of the late occupants of the wrecked coach, who, notwithstanding their injuries, were spellbound by the beautiful tones he produced.

Few artists have ever played to an audience under such extraordinary circumstances.

To return to the point whence I have digressed, the work that I wrote for the British Orchestral Society was my overture to Shakespeare's "Winter's Tale." It was performed on 6 February, 1873, at St. James's Hall, and, I am glad to say, pleased greatly; so much so, that it was

repeated some time after at one of the Crystal Palace Concerts.

In this overture I have attempted to illustrate the salient features of Shakespeare's romantic drama; but I have scarcely gone so far as to make it a piece of programme music. There is a point, however, just before the coda, where I have worked up the music to a climax which is interrupted by some notes for the trumpet alone, and which reproduce the opening phrase of the introduction. This phrase nowadays would be called the Hermione Leitmotif. It is intended to describe the startling incident in the last scene of the play, where Leontes is shown what he takes to be a statue of Hermione. The coda which follows is descriptive of his joy and that of those assembled upon discovering that the statue is none other than Hermione herself, "stolen from the dead" and restored to them as if by supernatural agency.

One of the last works I composed previous to my "Building of the Ship" (described in a later chapter), was my aria, "The Golden Gate." The words of this song were written by Hugh Conway upon a subject I suggested to him, which I will briefly describe. A lonely woman in great distress of mind, seeks shelter in the porch of a church, and whilst resting, she hears from within the sacred edifice the strains of a hymn well known to her in

happier days. Its soothing melody touches her heart and affords her the consolation she greatly needs. This aria I instrumented, and it was sung by Madame Patey at a Philharmonic Concert, which took place on 4 March, 1880.

CHAPTER XIV

BENNETT'S CONCERTO—AN OLD CONCERT PROGRAMME

I HAVE often regretted that I did not seek some other means than the profession of a teacher for turning my musical abilities to profitable account, because, of all occupations, it is the one that interferes more than any other with the work of composing. Apart from the time it takes, it undoubtedly tends to damp one's enthusiasm for the art, for one feels little inclined to work at composition after giving several hours' instruction in pianoforte or harmony. Nevertheless, many composers have devoted a large portion of their lives to this occupation; notably Sterndale Bennett, than whom, as a teacher, few professors have ever been in greater demand.

Sterndale Bennett, during the greater part of his life, was considered to be the most notable composer that England possessed. Even in Germany his works found favour, and they are still held in esteem in the Fatherland.

Although I occasionally met him at concerts and festivals, it was only when he came to reside in St. John's Wood that I became better acquainted with him. As I lived only a few minutes' walk from the house he had chosen, I one day took the opportunity of paying him a visit.

A very agreeable hour I spent in his society, and we had a most interesting conversation upon several musical subjects. Whilst I was with him I felt much tempted to ask him to play one of his compositions to me, but was afraid of presuming too far on a first visit. Perhaps if I had asked him he would not have acceded to my request, for I understood that he was not in the habit of playing even to his pupils.

Sir Sterndale Bennett was a man of slight build. His high and intellectual forehead conveyed the impression that he had a refined and cultured mind; his manner was kindly and reassuring.

Whilst talking with him, I could hardly realize that this modest and unassuming man was then at the head of his profession. I left him with very pleasant recollections of the interview, intending soon to pay him another visit. But, alas! the opportunity never came, for shortly after he was seized by serious illness which terminated in his death.

The last performance of his Concerto in F

Minor given during his lifetime was probably the one in which I took the solo part at the Novello Concerts in the year 1874. Although I knew this work well, and had often heard it, I had never before played it in public. I intended to perform it from memory at the concert, but at the rehearsal I am ashamed to say that my memory failed me, and I was obliged to stop and ask Joseph Barnby, who was conducting, to let me have a peep at the score. After which I was able to go on successfully to the end.

This incident, however, caused me to think it unwise to risk playing without the copy at the concert, though at the time I do not think I once looked at the notes—the fact that they were there made me perfectly safe.

A great deal has been said about the inadvisability of playing from memory in public. Some go so far as to say that it should never be attempted in *ensemble* music or in concertos, as a slip of memory jeopardises the whole performance. Certainly there is much truth in this view of the case—in fact there have been not a few musical disasters caused by the uncertainty of the memory.

For example, I was present at a Crystal Palace Concert when Von Bülow was playing Moscheles' Concerto in G Minor at the centenary of that

composer's birth. During the performance, at some point in the first movement, Von Bülow's memory suddenly failed him, and for a few bars he was at fault, but he succeeded in righting himself before the slip was noticed by any except those who knew the concerto as intimately as I did. Under some circumstances, it might have been impossible for even so accomplished a pianist and so fine a musician as Von Bülow to have avoided coming to a full stop, since no amount of musical knowledge will supply the place of memory. The same kind of contretemps happened once to Arabella Goddard, but she was less fortunate than Von Bülow. She was playing the well-known Capriccio of Mendelssohn in B Minor, op. 22, with orchestra, at a concert, when her memory played truant, and she was unable to proceed. She commenced again; but, at the same point where she had previously failed, her memory once more refused to act. Meanwhile, some one in the audience went out and succeeded in procuring a copy of the piece, which was handed to the fair pianist, who then made a fresh start and gave an admirable reading of the Capriccio.

Arabella Goddard, for many years our representative English pianist, was indeed a charming executant in every way. I remember that when she played at the Gewandhaus Concerts the

Germans called her "*die schöne Engländerin.*" She had a beautiful touch, refined and brilliant, and her certainty was exceptional. I never heard her play a wrong note; in fact, when one listened to her it seemed an impossibility for such an accident to occur. She had been a pupil of Thalberg, and no doubt her playing owed many of its excellent points to his system of technique.

A few words about the Novello Concerts, at which I played the Bennett Concerto, may not be out of place here. They were established three years after the opening of the Albert Hall where they took place, and the scheme was that of giving a concert every evening in the week during the winter season. According to the day of the week, each evening was devoted to a special style of concert. There was a classical night, a popular night, a Wagnerian night, an English night, and so forth. I was engaged for the English nights, and I conducted many well-known compositions by native composers, such as Sullivan's Symphony in E Minor, Prout's Organ Concerto, etc.

I took the opportunity of introducing several new English compositions that were sent to me for selection, amongst which was a symphony by H. Löhr.

The Wagner nights were conducted by Edward Dannreuther, while Barnby took the baton on the

classical evenings. Artistically, the concerts were a great success, although the orchestra was scarcely large enough for the Albert Hall. It might have been partly due to this cause, or to the fact that the hall was not sufficiently central, that the concerts were not well enough attended to justify Messrs. Novello in continuing them.

The general title of these concerts was:—

THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL CONCERTS.

EVERY EVENING.

I have before me now one of the programmes that I conducted. It is dated 10 November, 1874, and the selection was as follows:—

PART I

Overture . .	"The Sapphire Necklace"	ARTHUR SULLIVAN.
Glee . .	"O thou whose beams" .	SIR JOHN GOSS.
Air . . .	"I rejoice in my Youth"	G. A. MACFARREN.
Concerto in E for Pianoforte . .		SIR W. STERNDALE BENNETT.
Old Ditty .	"Drink to me only with thine eyes"	(1600)
Descriptive Piece for Orchestra	"The Lay of the Last Minstrel"	J. F. BARNETT.

PART II

Concerto in A Minor		W. G. CUSINS.
Ballad . . .	"The Woodpecker"	MICHAEL KELLY.
Solo Organ	Theme in A Minor with Variations .	W. T. BEST.
Song . . .	"Bid Me Discourse" .	BISHOP.
Part Song . . .	"Land of Beauty" . .	MENDELSSOHN.
Glee . . .	"Beauties, have you seen a Toy	EVANS.
Overture . . .	"Ruy Blas" . .	MENDELSSOHN.

It will be seen by this that the compositions performed, with two exceptions, were all by native

composers. Mr. Cusins performed the Bennett Concerto as well as his own composition, and Mr. W. S. Hoyte played the organ solo.

On the back of the programme I have just given I see announced for the next concert (17 November, 1874), among other items, a Symphony in G Minor by Sir J. Benedict; an overture, "Andromeda," by H. Gadsby; and Mendelssohn's G Minor Concerto. Pianist, Mr. Franklin Taylor. I notice too, as the accompanist of the songs, the name of Mr. W. H. Thomas.

CHAPTER XV

AS TEACHER—PROFESSORS OF THE PAST

AS musical education has occupied so much of my time and attention throughout the greater part of my life, I propose to devote some space to the subject, as it is one that I think will be found of more or less interest to my readers.

Although teaching the pianoforte is on the whole a monotonous occupation, occasionally it is relieved by the advent of a pupil of great musical intelligence. When one is fortunate in having to guide real talent in the paths of musical culture, the interest aroused in one's work is exceedingly keen. Such opportunities are not too abundant, but some have fallen in my way, and I am proud to say that among my former pupils not a few have risen to a high position in the musical profession.

The counterpart to this happy state of things was not infrequently in evidence. I recollect, many years ago, a middle-aged gentleman coming to me for pianoforte lessons. I asked him to

play something to me. When he had stumbled through a very simple piece in a most indifferent manner, he told me, to my surprise, that he was a teacher of music at several large schools for boys, but, feeling himself at a disadvantage, he wished to improve his own playing. Certainly there was ample room for improvement. He informed me that he had begun to study the pianoforte when he was about the age of forty-five. I felt quite ashamed at having to instruct so backward a pupil. However, he was a good-natured man, and not above being told what to do. But his fingers were so stiff through want of practice, that whenever he raised them high, the effort caused his face to assume a most comical expression.

As a rule, the greater number of those who study with a professor learn music purely as an accomplishment, and therefore one cannot expect much from them. Usually the tastes of such pupils incline to the light or drawing-room style of music, which was in full force when I commenced my labours in teaching.

Pieces by Leybach, De Voss, Schuloff, etc., were then much in vogue. One reason for this was that the romantic school of pianoforte music, as represented by Schumann and Chopin, as well as Schubert, was little known at that time in England, and comparatively few pieces

by these composers had then found their way into our homes.

Mr. Edwin Ashdown, the founder of the music publishing firm of Ashdown & Parry, told me the other day that Chopin's works, which were originally published in England by Wessel & Co., were for a long period a dead letter, from a music publishing point of view. In other words, they did not sell. Wessel lost money over them, and, as bad luck would have it, it was not until the copyright of these works had expired that a demand for them arose. The enlightening of the English public as to the beauties of Chopin was greatly due to Charles Hallé's performances of that composer's music. Chopin's works for the pianoforte had been in existence for years, yet comparatively few people in this country seemed to be aware of that fact.

Are there at the present day any composers of genuine worth whose light is thus hidden under a bushel, as was Chopin's for so long? Probably many an ambitious composer who has not as yet achieved fame will think so.

The experience of those professors whose aims are high in regard to the style of music they wish to teach, is as a rule disappointing, as they but rarely meet with an opportunity of training a pupil to a high art standard. Nevertheless, occasionally

one comes across musical ability of sterling value. An instance of the kind I may mention.

At a lady's school at Denmark Hill, where I had a large class of pianoforte students, I had a pupil who, after studying a few years with me, attained such technical skill that she was able to master successfully the difficulties of both the Chopin Concertos. The first of these works she learnt was the one in F Minor, which she played faultlessly after only three weeks of practice. I believe few students at our music colleges would be able to accomplish such a feat as this in so short a time. In my experience I never met, before or since, with any amateur who so quickly mastered the difficulties of a complicated piece of music as did this young girl. The second Concerto of Chopin she studied with Herr Lehmeyer, whom I had engaged as my substitute in consequence of my illness to which I have alluded.

I heard on my return to the school that Herr Lehmeyer was so surprised with the marvellous manner in which this schoolgirl played the first movement of the E Minor Concerto at the lesson, that at the end of the performance he warmly applauded her, much to the surprise of the prim schoolmistress who was present, and who was not accustomed to such enthusiastic demonstrations by the music professor.

This pupil married a year or two after she left the school, and at the wedding reception she gave to her friends, among whom I was included, she charmed every one by a most musician-like performance of Schubert's Sonata in D. This was the last time I heard her play, for about a year later I read with deep regret of her premature death.

As I have already mentioned, the musician who is greatly occupied with teaching finds it a difficult problem to eke out time for composition. Occasionally he has to sacrifice his teaching to make room for it. This I frequently had to do, more especially when I was writing the "Ancient Mariner" and "Paradise and the Peri." During these periods it was my private pupils whom I put off, as I could not interfere with scholastic engagements.

I found it a most dangerous thing to the cause of punctuality to endeavour to utilize a spare hour in composing before sallying forth upon a teaching expedition. For more than once my work so engrossed my thoughts that I forgot how time was passing, until a glance at my watch reminded me of the stern realities of life, and told me that I had already overstayed the hour in the fairyland of composition, and thereby had missed my train. More than one musician in his time has yielded too unconditionally to this fascinating spell. The late

Henry Smart, the versatile composer of the "Bride of Dunkerron" and important and useful organ solos, was frequently as much as three or four hours late at his school engagements owing to this enthralling occupation.

Henry Smart was a genial and sympathetic composer. I was much struck with his "Bride of Dunkerron," which I heard on its first performance at the Birmingham Festival of 1864. Many of his songs, such as the "Bell-ringer," will remain among the choice specimens of musical lyrics. The partial blindness which unfortunately overtook him in later years must have been a great hindrance to him in his work as composer and organist. The last time that I met him was on an occasion when I was associated with him as one of the adjudicators of a composition prize at the Royal Academy of Music.

Many important changes have taken place in regard to musical education in this country since I first entered the musical profession. The most noticeable of these has been the rapid growth of music schools and colleges, both public and private. In former times, when a young lady had left school, if her friends were desirous that she should continue her musical studies, they engaged a professor to give her private lessons, for which they would often pay very high terms. Thus a success-

ful teacher having a fashionable connexion frequently made it a rule to accept only those pupils who were moving in the highest spheres of society.

There is a story that my father once told me about Mrs. Anderson and Moscheles, which may be worth repeating.

Mrs. Anderson, who was a celebrated public player, and who also had the honour of being pianist to Queen Victoria, was one day giving orders at her greengrocer's, when the proprietress of the shop asked her whether it would be possible for her to arrange to give her own daughter pianoforte lessons. The fashionable pianist, it is said, was rather taken aback at such a suggestion, and politely declined the offer. Some few weeks later, Mrs. Anderson was again in the shop, when the proprietress said, with the air of one who had the best of the situation—

"My daughter is taking lessons of Moscheles, and I pay him a guinea a lesson."

While the time lasted, many music professors reaped a rich harvest from private lessons, which, in the majority of cases, were given at the house of the pupil.

When I returned from Germany, among the most successful teachers of the pianoforte were Ernest Pauer, Lindsay Sloper, and Benedict.

I have already alluded to having heard Pauer in Leipsic at the Gewandhaus Concerts, where I had an opportunity of appreciating his striking qualities as a pianist. Not only was he a fine musician, but he possessed great literary attainments, added to which he was quite a musical antiquarian, and by his researches many a great composition for the piano, or the keyboard instruments that preceded it, has been rescued from oblivion. His wonderful memory kept him thoroughly conversant with all in the way of pianoforte music that had ever been printed. He could even tell you who was the publisher of any particular piece, what key it was in, and, if called upon to do so, could play over portions of it. This wide knowledge of pianoforte music must have been of untold advantage when he gave his series of Historical Recitals at St. James's Hall. I was present at some of them, and was much struck with the fine interpretation he gave to so many compositions, both in ancient and modern styles. He also gained much distinction by the lectures he delivered on musical subjects, some of which were given at the Royal Institution.

Pauer did not limit his researches in music to compositions only in the classical style, but extended them to works in a lighter vein, that is to say to those that come under the head of drawing-room pieces.

It is difficult in many cases to define what is really classical in pianoforte music. Thus I recollect, when I was in Leipsic, Ernst Rudorff, of Berlin, who was then a fellow-student of mine, asked me whether I was learning anything by Chopin. On my telling him that I was studying that composer's Ballade in A flat, he said, "It is not a bit classical, but you will like it."—Chopin at that time had not been placed amongst the classics in music.

Pauer was very liberal in his views with regard to English music, and on one occasion gave a lecture entirely devoted to drawing-room music by native composers. Previous to this he wrote and asked me if I could let him have a composition of mine suitable for the subject he had chosen. Accordingly, I sent him my "Chapel by the Sea" and "Gavotte in G Minor." He selected the former, and he afterwards told me that the little piece pleased the audience greatly.

Pauer, who was over six feet in stature, was quite military in appearance, for in his youth he had served two years in the German army. He died not long ago at his country house in Heidelberg. At the time I knew him he was a man of iron nerve, and a wonderful worker. I recollect that at an examination at the Royal College of Music, at which he was one of the examiners,

a pupil complained to him of being nervous. "I do not know what nervousness is," said Pauer. "I have never felt it myself." Alas! there are few who could say as much, for nervousness is an evil spirit that haunts alike the professional artist and the student. But for nervousness many a pianist would have become celebrated!

It is said that Henselt, whose compositions for the piano prove him to have been a pianist of enormous executive powers, suffered so much from this physical weakness that he seldom appeared in public.

Apropos of Henselt,—Pachmann, the great Chopin pianist, told me once that a year or two prior to the death of Henselt he happened to pay that veteran pianist a visit, and to his surprise found him wearing as many as five thick coats, one over the other. Truly he must have been a chilly mortal!

One of the most notable music professors of the past was Sir Julius Benedict, whose success as a composer was at one time so great that many musicians were of opinion that, had he devoted all his energies to that branch of his art, he might have made an enduring reputation in the highest domain of music. In any case, during a considerable portion of his life he was greatly in request as a composer of works for the great

festivals. His oratorio "St. Peter" was produced at a Birmingham Festival; in addition to this he wrote several cantatas, some of which were written for the Norwich Festival, of which he was conductor. He was musical director and conductor of the Liverpool Philharmonic Society, and was greatly sought after during the London season for arranging the details and engaging artists for musical "at homes." Altogether he was one of the busiest musicians of the time; so that it seemed marvellous that he could have found leisure to work at composition at all. It was said by some he composed during the night and taught during the day; notwithstanding, he contrived to be present at nearly every important concert or fashionable reception given by patrons of musical art. You could go nowhere, where music was in evidence, without seeing Benedict. You would meet him one afternoon at Lady So-and-so's; the same evening he would be conducting a concert at Liverpool or Manchester; the next day he would be seen in the afternoon accompanying a concert. How he managed this kind of omnipresence was a mystery.

Benedict was a man of engaging manners, and, of course, quite a society man; yet, notwithstanding the high position he held in the musical world, he was at all times most accessible. He

was very kind to me, and took great interest in my works. When I played over my orchestral Suite, "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," previous to its performance at the Liverpool Festival, he expressed himself very pleased with the Finale, and the manner in which I had managed the crescendo leading to the re-entry of the principal theme. During the week of the Liverpool Festival at which this work was performed, I stayed a part of the time at the same hotel as did Benedict, and had several interesting conversations with him. He had much valuable information in regard to the great musicians of the past, for as a young man he had seen Beethoven; he had also been a favourite pupil of Weber, the composer of "Der Freischütz." To Benedict we owe a debt of gratitude for having handed down the musical programme of Weber's Concert-stück, which Weber himself disclosed to Benedict. The composer in this work merely gives the *tempi* of the movements, but he explained to his pupil Benedict that it was really a piece of programme music. The story it describes is supposed to have taken place during the time of the Crusades.

The pathetic and sometimes passionate movement with which the Concert-stück opens is descriptive of a maiden bewailing the absence of her lover, he being then far away in the Holy Land

fighting for the Cross. In the Allegro Passionato which follows we have a glimpse of the rush and turmoil of war, and we wonder whether the lover will escape all the dangers that surround him.

The first few bars of the second movement open sorrowfully; but what is it that strikes upon the ear of the disconsolate maiden? Is it not the distant sound of martial music? This in the score is expressed by the well-known March, which commences *pianissimo*, for wind alone. In imagination we see the Crusaders approaching, whilst the music of the March increases in volume until it works up to a grand *fortissimo*. The maiden sees her lover among the home-returning warriors, and the joy of their meeting finds its vent in the brilliant and exuberant Finale with which the Concert-stück terminates.

I am sorry, that whilst I had the opportunity, I did not ask Benedict endless questions about the celebrated composers and pianists he must have known more or less intimately, for, doubtless, he had a wealth of information at his disposal, much of which is now lost for ever.

Another musician full of interesting memories of composers and pianists of his time was Lindsay Sloper, who was one of the most successful teachers during his earlier career. He was editor of the first musical journal ever started. It was called

"Hanover Square," and was brought out by Ashdown & Parry. Lindsay Sloper asked me to contribute to it, and I accordingly wrote a little piece called "Sunrise," which was accepted. On republishing this piece in separate form I added a sequel, "Sunset," which latter was the first piece I wrote after my recovery from the illness to which I have already more than once alluded.

CHAPTER XVI

A NEW MUSIC-SCHOOL—CONDUCTORS AND PERFORMERS

IN these days a professor does comparatively little private teaching. Those who wish to study under a well-known master choose some musician of distinction who is engaged at one of the colleges or schools of music.

For many years the only institution of the kind that existed in London was the Royal Academy of Music, which during its earlier history was only available for those studying for the profession.

The first idea of founding a music-school for amateurs where the fees were, so to say, at popular prices, probably originated with Dr. Wylde, whom, as I have already said, I studied with as a boy before I went to Leipsic. In any case, on my return to England I found that he had started a scheme of the kind under the title of the London Academy of Music, and the course of instruction he offered was very efficient, consisting of a principal study, a second study, and harmony.

The London Academy of Music was originally held at St. James's Hall, or rather rooms that were included in that building. It proved to be a great success, so great that other schools of music were started on similar lines. But, strange to say, they were mostly failures, which showed conclusively that the public had not then become thoroughly converted to this mode of receiving musical instruction. In fact it was not until the Guildhall School of Music was founded that the success of this new departure in musical education became universal; but of this I will speak later on.

I have already alluded more than once to Dr. Wylde, to whose energy and businesslike capacities the London Academy owed its success, and who undoubtedly exercised considerable influence in musical circles during his life.

As a young man he took his degrees of Mus. Bac. and Mus. Doc. at Cambridge. I recollect that during the time I was studying with him, he was working hard at the composition of his "Paradise Lost," which was performed at the New Philharmonic at Exeter Hall on 11 June, 1853. This cantata displayed much musician-like feeling, as well as skill in orchestration, and one could not but admire the earnest manner in which in his music he had endeavoured to soar to the sublime heights that Milton's poem attains

in picturing a theme wellnigh beyond man's grasp.

To Dr. Wylde is due the honour of having introduced the music of "Lohengrin" in England, as far as it was possible to do so without the stage, and that too at a time when nothing too severe could be said about Wagner, as a composer, by the majority of the English critics and musicians. This interesting performance took place at a New Philharmonic concert in St. James's Hall on 11 June, 1873, when Titiens sang the part of Elsa with great dramatic power.

As a musician Dr. Wylde was very deeply read and highly cultured, and had moreover great enthusiasm for his art; but as an orchestral conductor he unfortunately did not hold a good position with the public or the press. In my opinion the performances he directed at the New Philharmonic Concerts suffered, not from any want of knowledge or appreciation of the music on his part, but from a lack of many of the technical requirements necessary for the making of a perfect *chef d'orchestre*. Conductors, like poets, are born, not made, although of course opportunities are necessary for gaining experience.

It does not follow that a fine musician must necessarily be a good orchestral conductor. Special qualifications are essential:—first, he must possess

a wonderfully quick eye for reading from the full score, and an equally quick ear in detecting false notes at rehearsals. A conductor must be of a passionate temperament, and be in full sympathy with the composer whose work he is interpreting; he must know, too, how much to leave to the performers. In an orchestral work there are numerous points in the music which are practically solos for the particular instruments which interpret them, and he must, therefore, avoid handicapping the players by unduly interfering with the artistic rendering of these points. An inexperienced conductor frequently makes a mistake by beating time in a manner that is too unrelenting in its strictness.

This remark calls forth some reflections in reference to the present state of public opinion on orchestral performances, as compared with that which existed when I was a young man.

There has probably never been an age in the history of music when hero-worship was so much in evidence as it is at the present day, and in regard to orchestral music, what lovers of it clamour for is a celebrated conductor. They flock to the concert-room to hear some great work of Beethoven or Wagner, and whilst listening to the performance under their favourite conductor, they regard him in the light of a magician, whose magic

wand conjures up the beautiful sounds which fill the hall. And as a matter of fact they are fully justified in their measure of praise. For, after all, the finest orchestra with an inefficient conductor might be likened to an army of heroes led by an incompetent general. Nevertheless, I recollect that formerly, at the conclusion of a performance of some orchestral work, one heard the names of certain members of the orchestra spoken of in admiration. Amateurs would remark how beautifully Lazarus had played the clarinet solos; how grand was Harper's tone on the trumpet; how silvery in effect were the notes of Pratten's flute, and so on.

Nowadays we seldom inquire who is playing; the names of those who perform the solo instruments among the wind instruments are little known to the musical public. Orchestral performers are almost looked upon as machines, or as if they were the stops of an organ, very beautiful in tone and effect.

Few of the public who attend concerts have any idea of the high musician-like requirements necessary to make a good orchestral performer. Not only must he be a thorough master of the particular instrument he has taken up, but he must be thoroughly reliable in *ensemble* playing.

Modern music makes enormous demands upon the orchestral player: the rhythms are frequently

so broken up and complicated, that it is wonderful how he can hold his own and avoid coming to grief. He must, indeed, often feel as if the other instruments, instead of giving help to him, are doing all in their power to put him out. In fact it frequently happens that from his standpoint everything seems wrong and incoherent, yet he knows that if he keeps strict time all will sound well.

But some people will say,—surely some of the instruments of percussion, such as the triangle and cymbals, must be quite easy to manage, and then they have generally very little to do.

A story, which bears on this subject, was told me by a member of the committee of the Sacred Harmonic Society in regard to a performance given by this society of Cherubini's Requiem in C Minor. At one point in this celebrated Requiem, viz. in the "Dies Iræ," the gong[1] comes in for one note only, but that note *fortissimo*.

At the meeting of the society previous to the performance, one of the committee, who went in for economy (there is always some one whose hobby it is to find out others' extravagance)—this particular member, then, complained that it seemed to him absurd to engage a performer only to play

[1] In the printed edition of Cherubini's Requiem in C Minor the gong is omitted, but it was nevertheless included in the composer's original score. See note in Edward Bellassis' "Memorials of Cherubini" (New Edition): Cornish Bros.

a single note, which note possibly no one would be any the wiser were it omitted. "Three guineas for one note," said he, "is reckless waste of money. Why! I will undertake to play that note myself." "That is all very well," said another member, "but suppose you come in a bar too soon?" The economical member, however, was thoroughly in earnest in what he proposed, and put it to the meeting, who accepted his offer, but on the condition that if he should play the note on the gong at a wrong part of the music he should incur the penalty of a fine of ten guineas. This caused the E.M. to reflect, and he wisely determined not to undertake the risk.

Another story somewhat similar I heard from my father. It has, however, often been told in various forms.

At the rehearsal of some orchestral piece in connexion with a theatrical performance that my father, as a boy, was engaged for, the orchestra was rehearsing a part of the music in which the trombone was only used occasionally in the piece, and that at very long intervals. The manager of the theatre, who was no musician, happened to be present, and noticed that the trombone player, who had been doing nothing for a considerable time, took up his instrument, played a few notes, and then put it down again in a very unconcerned

manner. He kept his eye upon the player, and seeing that he was still idle, his wrath, which had been working up to fever heat, could contain itself no longer. He called out to the orchestra in savage tones: "Stop! I have been watching that trombone player for the last ten minutes, and he has not played three notes the whole time. He shall be discharged from the orchestra." When the astonished trombone player could obtain a hearing, he endeavoured to explain matters by telling the irate manager that he had a hundred and thirteen bars rest. "You scoundrel!" exclaimed the manager with an oath, "I do not pay you to rest, I pay you to play."

To return to Dr. Wylde, whatever his faults were as a conductor, those who followed his career in regard to the New Philharmonic Concerts were unanimous in their opinion of him as being an excellent manager and good man of business.

In 1874 he entered into an arrangement with Herr W. Ganz to divide the conducting of the concerts between them, which arrangement continued until 1879, when Ganz took over the entire management. He thus became sole *chef d'orchestre*, which important post he successfully held up to the year 1882, when the New Philharmonic Concerts came to an end, having flourished for upwards of thirty years.

It was at one of these concerts, whilst Ganz was the conductor, that my overture to Shakespeare's "Winter's Tale," which I have already spoken of, was again performed, and I had on the occasion a reception which I shall always look back upon with pride.

The recollection of the New Philharmonic Concerts calls to my mind many a fine pianist or violinist of former times. Some of these I heard before I went to Germany, others after I had returned to England. Among the pianists was Emile Prudent, born in 1817, who appeared at these concerts in 1853. He had a charming touch and most fluent execution. Another pianist who excelled in these qualities was Alfred Jaell, whom I often heard at the New Philharmonic and elsewhere. Jaell was of small stature, but so stout that it was surprising, with his exceedingly short arms, that he was able to get sufficiently near the keyboard to give his fingers a fair chance of doing their duty. All who heard him were glad that he overcame this difficulty with success, for he was a splendid pianist. He was born in 1832. Among the violinists whose performances I became acquainted with at these concerts was Erneste Sivori, born as far back as 1817. He was a pupil of Paganini, to whom perhaps he owed his beautiful tone. To hear him in the slow movement of

the Mendelssohn Concerto was akin to listening to some singer with a magical voice, his tone was so ethereal in effect. Then I often heard Henri Vieuxtemps, the composer of many concertos for the instrument he played, the difficulties of which have sorely pressed upon the capacities of the violin student, causing him hours of toil. But Vieuxtemps knew not difficulty—all appeared easy to him. It is therefore not to be wondered at that he is said to have been very merciless with his pupils if they failed in grappling with the feats of brilliancy he exacted from them. He was born in 1820, and studied with the celebrated De Beriot. But the poet on his instrument was Ernst, Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst, to give him his name in full, who was born in 1814. Tall and lank in figure, his pose was the idealistic impersonation of a violinist. His expressive style in pathetic melodies drew tears from his audience. His execution was enormous, although occasionally marred by uncertain intonation. Another master of the violin was Henri Wieniawski, full of fire and dash. He was a native of Poland, and born in 1835.

All these great players are now of the past, and although their places have been filled by performers of consummate genius, it is a question as to whether certain specialities that were noticed in

the playing of these great artists of bygone times are not in a way a lost art; just as is the method of colouring by the old masters in painting.

No doubt, in lieu of these specialities, others of a more demonstrative kind have been substituted, more in accordance with the demand for that passionate sensationalism which is so prevalent a feature of the age we live in.

It may not be out of place here to say a few words about the celebrated Sigismond Thalberg (born in 1812). As a pianist he might be described as a stepping-stone between the older and newer styles of pianoforte playing. I heard him at one of his last recitals in 1863. Judging from his fantasias, I expected a rather wild style of playing; instead of which, I was surprised at the wonderful neatness of his execution, even when allied to extraordinary feats of *bravura*. His manner at the piano was free from any eccentricity. In the most complicated passages he appeared to be quite calm and collected. I was much struck with the rapidity of the *staccato* octaves in his "L'Elisir d'Amore." His rendering of the repeated notes in triplets which occur in his "Theme original et étude" was quite a revelation, and roused the audience to the utmost enthusiasm.

CHAPTER XVII

THE NATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOL

IN the year 1876 I received an invitation to join the staff of professors at a new and important institution, the National Training School of Music, and the invitation came from no less a person than Arthur Sullivan, who wrote personally to me. Of course, I accepted the appointment with pleasure.

A little time after there was a formal opening of the Training School by H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh at the commodious building[1] specially designed for it, and which was the munificent gift of Sir Charles Freake. The opening ceremony, which took place in 1876, proved to be very interesting. The newly appointed professors were introduced by Arthur Sullivan, the Principal, to the Duke of Edinburgh, who shook hands most warmly with each professor.

It seems only yesterday that I entered upon my duties at this institution. I fully realized the im-

[1] This building is now the *local* of the Royal College of Organists.

portant nature of the post to which I had been appointed. I was not engaged to teach pianoforte merely as an accomplishment, but to train students to become competent professors.

The experience I had gained in Leipsic, and to which I had added by years of teaching, came in most opportunely. I felt, too, I had a free hand in giving the students placed under my care a more thorough technical training than would have been possible in ordinary educational schools.

It is satisfactory to note in how many cases my efforts in the direction of forming a sound technique have borne good fruit; not a few of those who studied with me at the National Training School having been most successful, both as pianists and professors. Amongst these I have only to name Herbert Sharpe, who was for six years one of my pianoforte pupils at this institution, and who is now one of the most esteemed professors at the Royal College of Music. Then again, Dr. Walter Alcock, now Organist of the Chapel Royal, studied pianoforte with me, as did Dr. Sweeting, now Master of Music at Winchester College, and Miss Monimia Twist, now a professor at the Guildhall School.

That the National Training School to a great extent served as a model on which the Royal College of Music was formed, must be evident to

all who have been connected with the two institutions; nevertheless, there were distinctive features between the Training School and the College.

The Training School did not throw its doors open to paying students to the same extent that the Royal College does, for, with few exceptions, only those who had gained scholarships were admitted as students. These scholarships lasted for five years, and were sufficiently numerous[1] to make a goodly show of students in regard both to numbers and talent. But there was one weak point in the scheme, which was, that the scholarships subscribed by the donors were for the limited period of five years only, after which the funds that supported them ceased entirely.

It could not have been intended that the institution was to exist only for that short period. But to me it never seemed clear what was to happen after the expiration of the scholarships. This difficulty, apparently, was never surmounted. The donors of the scholarships were invited to continue their grants for another year, which, in the majority of cases, they consented to do. Thus, the National Training School existed altogether for six years, after which it disappeared—to make way, however, for that still more important institution, the Royal College of Music.

[1] The number of these scholarships was eighty-five in all.

Apart from the difference in regard to the lines on which the Training School and the College were founded, there were features in the system of instruction at the former institution which differed from that of the latter. One of these was the mode of conducting the examinations of the students in regard to practical subjects. At the Royal College the students are examined in private; but at the Training School all the professors and pupils were allowed to be present at the examinations. This, I think, was a very interesting feature, but one, however, that would be scarcely practicable at the Royal College, with its more numerous students. The examinations, therefore, were like concerts, and had the advantage of giving opportunities to the professors of hearing students other than their own perform. Thus, those who were prominent by their talent made a reputation in the institution more rapidly than would otherwise have been possible.

The concerts and examinations were held in the West Theatre of the Albert Hall. The professors were seated on the platform quite in proximity to the student performing, while the other students remained in the body of the room.

One evening, going in during the progress of one of the concerts, I heard Chopin's Impromptu being played in a manner that was quite remarkable, in

regard to both style and execution. The style coincided so exactly with the ideal I had formed of what the music suggested, that it was a pleasure for me to hear the piece thus interpreted. It was all the more surprising as the player was but a boy of thirteen years. I asked who it was playing so beautifully; and was told that it was Eugene D'Albert, a pupil of Pauer. My estimate of the boy's performance was certainly not overrated, and time only went to prove that in this performance were the germs of the great artist he eventually became.

The examinations held just before Easter were conducted by an examiner not belonging to the Training School, a system which in a modified form is continued at the Royal College.

Charles Hallé was generally examiner for the piano at the Training School.

At one of these examinations a student had chosen Mendelssohn's Capriccio in B minor, op. 22, and as in the cases of pieces with orchestral accompaniment the orchestra was represented by a second piano (a custom very much in vogue at conservatoires, both here and abroad), there should have been another student ready to play this piano part. On this occasion, however, no student came forward; thereupon Arthur Sullivan volunteered to fill in the orchestral accompaniments from memory.

This he did most admirably, except in one part where his memory temporarily failed him. During this contretemps, it was not a little amusing to observe the good-naturedly malicious smile that came over Hallé's face whilst poor Sullivan was in difficulties.

The greatest artists, however, have their occasional lapses of memory.

It is even said that once, at a concert, Charles Hallé himself fell into an unfortunate dilemma whilst playing Mendelssohn's fourth Characteristic Piece, sometimes called "Hugendleben." After the repetition of the first theme, instead of going on to the coda he went back to the commencement, which obliged him to recapitulate all the earlier part of the piece. This he did more than once, each time finding himself again at the beginning. But at last he found his way out of the maze, and extricated himself from what was an extremely awkward position for a pianist to be in.

Arthur Sullivan did not remain at the head of the Training School until its close, but owing to pressure of work resigned the post of Principal in favour of Dr. (afterwards Sir John) Stainer, who occupied that position for one year.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC

AFTER the Training School ceased work various rumours were afloat in regard to the founding of a new institution, somewhat on the same lines. It was at one time proposed that this new institution should amalgamate with the Royal Academy of Music; but there were apparently insurmountable difficulties in the way of this scheme. A meeting, in fact, was called to which the Professors of the Royal Academy and those of the late Training School were invited, to consider the situation. I received an invitation to attend it; but owing to a serious case of illness at home, I was unable to be present.

It was, at last, resolved to establish a new national College of Music, in which the leading feature should be the founding of numerous scholarships. For this purpose the representative bodies of the most important towns in the United Kingdom were invited to subscribe; and, moreover, the Prince of Wales (now King Edward VII) gave

his patronage and support to the undertaking. The result was most gratifying, and the appeal was so well responded to that the fifty scholarships necessary for the granting of the Royal Charter were subscribed for in a comparatively short space of time.

The formal opening of the College on 7 May, 1883, at which I was present, was a most important and interesting event. It took place in the same building that had been occupied by the Training School, and which was to be for several years the *local* of the new college.

The Prince of Wales made a most impressive speech, in which he declared the Royal College of Music to be opened. His Royal Highness then announced the conferring of knighthood upon George Grove (who was to be the Director), as well as upon Arthur Sullivan and George Macfarren, the Principal of the Royal Academy of Music.

I happened to be sitting on one side of Macfarren at the time, and Arthur Sullivan on the other. Macfarren, from what he was saying, seemed to be diffident as to accepting the honour that had been just conferred upon him; but both Sullivan and myself were of opinion that he should not refuse a distinction to which he was in every way entitled.

I was glad that in the end Macfarren accepted the honour, as no musician more thoroughly

deserved it than he. He had great originality of thought and, as a composer, would probably have had still greater success if his early composition studies had been formed on the more modern lines to which he afterwards became so devotedly attached. He was quite an enthusiast for Brahms; but in regard to Wagner, I do not remember his giving an opinion in my hearing. Macfarren's greatest work was, no doubt, his oratorio, "St. John the Baptist," which was produced at the Bristol Festival of 1873. I heard it when it was given at the Sacred Harmonic in 1874, and was much struck with the dramatic effect produced by the manner in which the chorus describes the dancing of the daughter of Herodias before Pilate. The orchestra at this point has a quaint and weird dance rhythm, whilst the chorus utter the words, "She danceth!" The whole of the scene is very cleverly worked out, and the composer has avoided anything inappropriate in the music descriptive of the dance, that might be considered out of place in an oratorio.

I recollect on one occasion dining with Macfarren at his house in Hamilton Terrace. After dinner I played some of Bach's Fugues to him, as I knew how great was his devotion to the composer of the immortal forty-eight. Mrs. Macfarren—for I think this was before knighthood had been conferred

upon her husband—seemed to deplore the amount of time that he was obliged to sacrifice to composition in order to carry out the Festival commissions which the success of "St. John the Baptist" had led to. These commissions had come to him somewhat late in life, at the time when he had entirely lost his eyesight. His work, therefore, must have been attended with difficulties one would have thought to have been almost insurmountable.

In the history of great men, how often we find that their finest works have been produced under circumstances of stress or misfortune! Mozart whilst upon his death-bed added immortal notes to his Requiem.[1] Beethoven became totally deaf during the latter part of his life; while George Macfarren, like the poet Milton, was stricken blind. It would be difficult to say which of the two misfortunes is the greater disaster to a musician. Sound being the element of his work, it would seem that deafness

[1] The commission for this Requiem by a mysterious stranger probably had a more or less disquieting effect upon so impressionable a temperament as that of Mozart. When I was a boy I quite believed the legend that Mozart had not long before his last illness been visited by an angel, who made him promise to write a Requiem. One's faith in such legends was stronger then than now. The historian, to the disappointment of the impressionable, has demolished many a tale of romance or of superstition. The mysterious stranger, whom the imaginative converted into an angel, we know was no other than Leutgeb, the steward of Count Walsegg, who thought to palm off Mozart's work as his own.

would prove as fatal to his art as blindness to that of the painter. But a composer who cannot hear, if his imagination be vivid, can conjure up sounds in his mind and put them down in his score, and though he may never actually hear his works they may live to be a source of enjoyment to others, as did so many of Beethoven's works.

But the blind composer is at a terrible disadvantage when writing for orchestra, for it is highly important that he should be able to look at his score, in order to calculate the balance of sound that will result from the combination of instruments employed. Macfarren was obliged to dictate to an amanuensis the name and time-value of each individual note that he intended for his orchestral score! A slow and laborious process, enough in itself to have frozen his ideas at their source. It was indeed a marvellous feat that he accomplished.

I may here incidentally mention that George Macfarren, who took an active part in musical matters, was present at a meeting of musicians at which the permission of the trustees of Mendelssohn was demanded to allow that composer's posthumous works to be published. Macfarren, I was told, spoke in a most excited manner on the subject, pointing out the hardship it was to lovers of Mendelssohn that such treasures of art should be withheld from them.

It was owing perhaps to Macfarren's strenuous efforts that, shortly after, the Reformation Symphony and other important works of Mendelssohn were rescued from the legal bondage in which they had lain so many years.

Amongst those posthumous works, was a short Ave Maria, which Mendelssohn intended to have incorporated in his opera "Lorely," and in which a note for the horns, as an inner part, is sustained during the entire piece. It is wonderful what varied and interesting harmonies Mendelssohn has managed to introduce whilst this one note is persistently held on. I heard it performed for the first time in England at a concert conducted by Benedict. The effect was most charming. The sustained note conveyed a feeling of peaceful solemnity.

I am afraid that I have wandered far from the subject that was uppermost in my mind when I commenced this chapter, though not to the extent of causing me to forget it altogether.

After the opening ceremony of the Royal College of Music had been duly accomplished, the first business to be done was the selecting of the scholars from the numerous candidates that offered themselves. These came from all parts of the United Kingdom.

The examination of these candidates took place

before the Director and the whole of the teaching staff of the College. Sir George Grove was quite in his element amongst the assembled musicians, one of whom was Madame Goldschmidt (Jenny Lind). In the earlier days of the College she was one of the professors for singing.

A large proportion of the scholarships were awarded to pianoforte candidates, several of whom were placed in my class.

On the first day of my instruction at the College I felt as if I were resuming my work at the Training School. Even the room in which I taught was the same, but I realized the added importance of my new position and did my best to rise to the occasion.

In addition to my pianoforte class I undertook one in harmony, which I continued for a few years, until my pianoforte class became too large for me to be able to devote time to both. I therefore, with the permission of the director, gave myself up entirely to my pianoforte students. Amongst these were several of great talent, as their subsequent careers have fully proved. One of my best pupils during the earlier history of the College was Marmaduke Barton, who is now a professor at the College.

Having, as already stated, been acquainted with Sir George Grove from the time of my boyhood, I

was delighted to find myself brought into still closer relationship with him. For twice a week, on the days that I attended the College, I met him at luncheon, during which he enlivened us all by his versatile and witty conversation, which seemed never to flag. His memory was wonderful. He could quote whole pages from works he had read when he was quite a young man.

He always had a cheerful ring in his conversation, and he often showed how vast was his knowledge upon almost every subject; yet he was never pedantic. Occasionally his remarks became of a somewhat personal character, not without a touch of banter, but they were never sarcastic or ill-natured.

George Watson, the late Registrar of the College, was likewise a very genial companion at these gatherings, and most popular with all at the institution. His death about a year after the opening of the present building of the College, the munificent gift of the late Samson Fox, was deplored by all who knew him. I ought not here to omit mentioning the fact that, to a great extent, it was owing to George Watson's energy and power of organization that the Associated Board was launched with such success.

CHAPTER XIX

THE ASSOCIATED BOARD

IN the history of music in this country during the middle of the last century, musical examinations do not seem to have received the attention that is given to them nowadays. Even when I was a student at the Royal Academy of Music, I do not recollect once being examined during the four years I was studying there, except on the occasion of the two scholarships that I gained. This would seem strange at the present day, when examinations are considered to be all-important.

Although the yearly examinations at the Royal Academy and the Royal College are looked forward to by the students with varied feelings, in which nervousness is perhaps predominant, all concur in valuing their importance. These examinations have generally for their object the defining of the progress of the student. But those of the Associated Board fix a standard of proficiency for which it gives a certificate, and this standard varies according to the grade chosen by the candidate.

There is no doubt that the first idea of this latter style of musical examination originated with Trinity College, London. Some years afterwards the Royal Academy of Music followed most successfully on similar lines. It was thus fully proved that there was an ever-growing desire on the part of the public to have their sons and daughters examined in music. It may here be incidentally remarked that on the Continent no such general public feeling for musical examinations seems to exist. It would therefore appear that this love of being examined is peculiar to the English-speaking race; for we find it extending to all our colonies and dominions.

It was indeed a happy thought that led to the Royal Academy and the Royal College joining hands, for the purpose of conducting musical examinations, under the title of the Associated Board. All who have followed the progress of this important body concur in their respect for the memory of the late Lord Charles Bruce, the first Chairman of the Board. It was greatly owing to his tact and judgment that the Associated Board was started with such success. The influence he brought to bear by his geniality and amiability of character was fully reciprocated by its members, so that from the commencement perfect accord attended their deliberations. This salutary feature

continues to mark the Board's proceedings under its present accomplished chairman. As a result their labours are rewarded with continued and increasing success.

It was in the second year after the Associated Board had started work that the Prince of Wales, as its President, took the chair for the first time at the meeting which was held at Marlborough House on 20 July, 1891. I was present on this occasion, and was deeply impressed with the keen interest His Royal Highness manifested in the proceedings of the Board, as well as by the businesslike accuracy he brought to bear upon the details of its work. The beautiful saloon where the meeting took place was filled with musicians of note, the professors of the Royal Academy and Royal College of Music being strongly represented. We all felt how great an encouragement royalty had given us in the cause of musical art.

I well recollect the first examination tour to which I had been appointed by the Board in conjunction with Arthur O'Leary. We went first to Middlesbrough, and afterwards examined at several other towns on the Yorkshire coast.

During this tour I had the opportunity of making myself personally acquainted with places I had only read of before, or studied in my school-days in connexion with geography.

I learnt indeed many things that no books could have taught me. I found, too, how often the reality differs from the picture one forms in one's mind.

Bath struck me as even more beautiful than I had anticipated, when I first visited that city with Mr. John Thomas, the celebrated harpist and my fellow-examiner. On this tour we also went to Bristol, where we received great hospitality from the local representative.

As some of my readers may not be aware of what constitutes a local representative, I will do my best to explain. In the plan carried out by the Associated Board, certain towns are chosen for centres, to which the candidates from neighbouring places come up for examination. As it is important that there should be some one at the centre to carry out the necessary arrangements, such as the securing of an eligible room, with a suitable piano, and other details necessary for the comfort of the candidates and their examiners; a gentleman is invited to perform these important duties, and he is known as the local representative.

It is curious how the pianoforte candidates are almost everywhere in the majority as to numbers. There are, nevertheless, a fair proportion of violinists, singers, and occasionally a few candidates who are harpists or organists.

In regard to the latter, the examination not infrequently takes place at some church in which there is a suitable organ. I recollect on one occasion the blower failed to put in an appearance when my fellow-examiner and myself had to test the merits of an organ candidate. The only way out of the difficulty was for one of us to blow the organ whilst the other examined. Fortunately, my confrère most generously offered to blow whilst I conducted the examination, an arrangement which was certainly to my advantage.

On another occasion when we examined an organ candidate we were more fortunate. This was at Bristol, where we were provided with an excellent chamber organ, the bellows of which were worked by hydraulic power. As the organ was at the house of Mr. George Riseley, it gave me the opportunity of making the acquaintance of this accomplished musician, who has done so much good in disseminating a love for choral and orchestral music by the concerts he has conducted.

In addition to the local centre work that I have been describing there are the school examinations of the Associated Board. These are generally held at some convent or school, each examination being conducted by one professor only, upon whom rests the sole responsibility as to whether the candidate succeeds or fails.

The musician always finds much to interest him in conducting these examinations. In the elementary division especially, he meets with many instances of budding talent. Perhaps a little girl of nine comes in with her violin, which has to be tuned for her. A most serious business! Then she takes it up in quite a professional manner, assuming the same air of importance as if she were performing at a concert.

Some of these little ones do really surprise us by the extraordinary command they have over the instrument, proving that more child wonders exist than are represented in the concert-room.

As for the juvenile pianists, they abound at these examinations, and very prettily some of them play. Fortunately, in the elementary division no marks are awarded for judicious use of the pedal, for it is seldom that these children can reach this important adjunct of the piano.

How intensely curious they are, too, to know whether they have met with success. Perhaps one of them has the courage to say in a timid whisper, "Do tell me if I have passed." Then when you have informed her that it is against the rules to divulge the decision arrived at, she asks, innocently, "Has my sister passed?"

The elder candidates, if girls in their teens can be so specified, generally suffer from nervousness.

They seldom appear to have the same amount of confidence shown by the little ones.

I have often been astonished at the proficiency displayed by candidates in the higher division, and wonder how they could have reached such a standard of excellence with the limited amount of time that can be allotted to music among their many other studies.

It does one good to see a boy candidate enter the lists, for it is certain that as he grows older music will become a part of his existence, refining his mind and placing before him a higher ideal of life. Added to this, he is actually learning the language of music. After all, music is a language in itself! And, if he perseveres, he will later on be able to enter into fully, and appreciate the beauties contained in the works of the immortal composers.

One important feature in the details of these examinations is the selection of music embodied in the syllabus of the various divisions. The pieces and studies are always chosen with great skill and judgment, and in themselves form a musical curriculum of the highest order, divided into various grades of difficulty, thus enabling the youthful student to mount higher and higher by easy steps, until he arrives at the temple of art and becomes enrolled among her most ardent votaries.

CHAPTER XX

THE GUILDHALL SCHOOL—MUSIC IN ALDERMANBURY

LOOKING back over many years, the recollection of certain events in our lives is sometimes so vivid that it seems only yesterday that they occurred. At other times, the same events appear so remote that we wonder how we can recall them to memory. I think, however, that nothing gives one the "long while ago" feeling so strongly as coming across an old letter. The very paper upon which it was written has turned yellow, the ink has faded; and when, as is often the case, the writer of it has passed away, one feels indeed how heavy the hand of time can be.

Some such thoughts came to me as I looked over an old letter the other day and found it dated 1880. As this letter marked at the time a new era in the history of musical education as well as in my own occupations, I will give it in full.

"*Feb.* 19, 1880.

"My dear Sir,

"I find it impossible to pay you a visit on Sunday, so write that which I intended speaking to you about.

"It is proposed to found a school of music by the City of London Music Deputation, and as I have been requested to organise a staff of the most efficient available professors for their approval, I shall be obliged by your kindly letting me know whether you are willing to accept a class for pianoforte; terms to be agreed upon between yourself and the committee when the necessary arrangements are completed.

"Believe me,

"Yours faithfully,

"H. Weist Hill."

This letter, as will be easily surmised, referred to the forming of the Guildhall School of Music; but it would appear from it that the title of the school had not been fixed upon when Mr. Weist Hill wrote to me. In reply I stated my terms, which were accepted, and about the September following I received a letter informing me that a class awaited me to commence with at the temporary premises of the school.

These premises had evidently been used as offices and warehouses for some City concern.

They consisted of the house known as 16 Aldermanbury together with a building in the rear, which were separated by a courtyard; but communication between the two was established by means of a covered passage. On the first floor in the front building was the principal's room, facing the street. The back room on the same floor, overlooking the courtyard, was the room in which I held my class for several years. It was, however, in the principal's room that I gave my first lesson —the first, I have been told, given in the school; although the late Madame St. Viard Louis, a lady professor, is said to have claimed this prerogative.

I should have preferred the principal's room for my work, as it was exceedingly quiet; whereas from my room were heard, all too plainly, the mingled sounds of music from several classrooms whose windows, as did my own, all opened on to the courtyard.

In summer-time we could not well keep the windows closed, and the sounds that issued from these rooms, although separately they might have been harmonious enough, collectively were most discordant. The window opposite mine was so near that it looked as if, by making a long arm, it were possible to shake hands across the courtyard with the professor who occupied the room on the other side.

Here Signor Ferri, a popular singing-master, was perhaps giving a lesson to a very dramatic and all-too-powerful soprano, whose telling voice mingled with the strains of a violinist in the room above; whilst a little to the right, in another room, a concerto for pianoforte was being handled vigorously by some ambitious student. It seemed unnecessary for me to counsel my pupils to add to the musical vibrations which poured into the courtyard from every side; yet, nevertheless, I imagine that I did not fail in doing my duty in this respect.

The lovers of the polyphonic in music might have heard some curious combinations of harmony (?) in this courtyard. Had there been a possibility of preserving the strains, who knows, they might have been valuable to some ultra-modern composer of the more advanced school.

Signor Ferri, whose name I have mentioned, seemed to live eternally in the room that was opposite to mine. However early I commenced my class, there I saw Signor Ferri with a pupil beside him, either warbling some solfeggi, or singing, in a most tragic manner, some Italian scena. When I had finished my work in the evening, there still was Signor Ferri discoursing sweet music with some student, whilst more were waiting their turn to have the coveted lesson, for he

was immensely popular with his pupils. I was told that he was thus fully engaged from morning till night, every day in the week, and that he made something like a thousand a year. His success, I am afraid, entailed too great a strain upon his physical powers, for one day, some few years after the school had been opened, I heard that he had died, after a short illness, at the age of fifty-five.

Notwithstanding many drawbacks, especially the absence of quiet in the teaching-rooms, I liked the old quarters of the Guildhall School. The quaint panelled rooms, and the incongruity of the building as the *local* of so successful a music-school, seemed to add a special interest of its own, somewhat of the same kind as that which one feels when a shabbily garbed man is pointed out to you as the head of some important commercial concern.

It was in the old building that some of my most successful pupils received their training in piano-forte playing from me. Amongst these were R. Orlando Morgan and W. J. Barton, who were afterwards appointed as professors at the School.

By a curious coincidence, at the time W. J. Barton was studying with me at the Guildhall School, Marmaduke Barton was one of my class at the Royal College of Music, both being pupils of whom I was justly proud. I understood

that, in consequence, occasionally some confusion occurred, the meritorious achievements of the one Barton being, by mistake, credited to the other.

The continued and ever-increasing influx of pupils to the Guildhall School began seriously to tax the space-limit of the Aldermanbury premises. The large rooms, and even the passages, were subdivided into small classrooms by the aid of wooden partitions, in order to accommodate a greater number of pupils. These extemporized rooms were most unsatisfactory for teaching purposes, for the thin partitions which divided them, offered practically no hindrance to the transmission of sound from one room to another. If two pianoforte masters were giving lessons in adjoining rooms it had all the effect of a duet for two pianos, and indeed it would have been quite excusable if either professor were at a loss to know which of the two performances was represented by his pupil.

Certainly, those engaged in teaching had often to harden, not their hearts, but their ears against the trying effects of the multitude of musical sounds that were heard on all sides. Many a professor had to endure such discords as that of hearing a cornet from the other side of a partition commencing an air in B flat, whilst his pupil was

playing in the key of A minor. But hitherto the school had not been invaded by the kettledrum. Yet one day, whilst a singing master was engaged in teaching, he was surprised at hearing unusual sounds. He little knew that in the adjacent room a pair of full-sized kettledrums were already in position, and that a timpani professor was just commencing to initiate his pupil in the method of performing a *tremolo* with all due effect. Our singing *maestro*, who was in blissful ignorance of the danger which threatened him, probably thought that the mysterious rumblings were due to some natural cause, such as distant thunder, or it might be that the weird sounds he heard were only the echoes of the ceaseless turmoil of the City in the midst of which the School was planted.

A good drummer must, of course, be able to bring out a big tone from his instrument when a *fortissimo* sign in his part directs him to do so. The timpani expert must therefore have been giving his pupil some grand example of the volume of sonority possible to kettledrums, when his next-door neighbour was startled by a bang that he at first imagined to be the report of a cannon. But upon a continuance of sonorous thuds, the singing professor became aware of the true state of things, and there being no law by which he could order the drummer and his pupil away, as is possible for

the "enraged musician" in the case of a barrel organ, he had to make the best of matters, and to await his opportunity for hearing his pupil during the intervals of silence which occasionally occurred. These intervals, however, were rare—so rare that his patience became exhausted, and, on the first opportunity, he vented his indignation in regard to the matter in a powerful appeal to the authorities.

It was at once admitted that a palpable grievance existed, and that, of course, he was not the only master whose class was disorganized by the terrible sounds emanating from the room in which the drummer gave his lessons. But the difficulty was to find a sound-proof room in which the drummer's pupil could receive instruction. A happy thought at last occurred to some one: Why not utilize the coal-cellar as a classroom for timpani lessons? It was sufficiently spacious, and the presence of coals would not perceptibly injure the acoustics. Strange as this proposition may sound to my readers, it was actually carried out, and the drummer and his pupil had from that time to put up with such extemporized accommodation as could be provided for them in the coal-cellar of the temporary premises of the School.

These lessons must indeed have had a weird effect in the lugubrious precincts of the cellar, and

certainly both master and pupil afforded a noble example as to what lengths enthusiasm will go in order to battle against the difficulties that sometimes beset the votaries of art.

CHAPTER XXI

THE GUILDHALL SCHOOL—ITS EARLY HISTORY

FEW of the general public now remember Mr. Weist Hill, the first Principal of the Guildhall School of Music. I had met him on several occasions prior to the establishment of the School. One of these was at the Hereford Festival, where he was among the first violins of the orchestra. He was a man of good appearance, and above the average in stature. His shrewd and almost piercing eye, his black moustache, and mouth, sometimes sarcastic, sometimes facetious in expression, imparted to his face a character sufficiently striking, and was further emphasized by his dark complexion.

The choice of Weist Hill as Principal of the School, came about in consequence of his connection with an orchestra and choral society of which he was conductor. This society, it appears, had its origin in one of the suburbs south of the Thames. Its secretary was Mr. Charles P. Smith. As several of the members were City men, it was

arranged that the concerts given by this society should take place at the Guildhall. At one of the meetings held by the society in 1879, at which some members of the Court of Common Council were present, it was proposed to found a School of Music in the City. This proposition ultimately met with the favour of the Corporation, who had already shown sympathy in the cause of music in a very substantial manner in 1876, by voting £5000 for scholarships for the National Training School of Music.

In the end, it was decided to start the Guildhall School without loss of time in the warehouse at Aldermanbury, already described, with Mr. Weist Hill for Principal, and Mr. Charles P. Smith as Secretary. As they were both practical men, I have no doubt that the system of the new School, in regard to the arrangement of the studies and manipulation of fees, was due to them. This system was the secret of the unbounded success of the concern. At no music school, indeed, has the number of students ever reached the high figures that the Guildhall School attained when it had been in existence for but a few years. Should any one passing down Aldermanbury give a glance at the exterior of No. 16, where the School carried on its work for seven years, it would appear almost incredible that so small a building could have found

accommodation for the three thousand students that were wont to pass through the homely doorway.

After the School had been at work about a year, evidence of what had been accomplished was made apparent by a concert given at the Guildhall.

In the early history of this undertaking some of the most successful performances were given in conjunction with a choir of ladies' voices. The formation of this choir was greatly due to the energy and perseverance of Mrs. Charles P. Smith, the Lady Superintendent of the School, who vied with her husband, the secretary, in her zeal for its advancement. She had many difficulties to overcome before the necessary number of ladies could be found to constitute a choir sufficiently large to be effective in so vast a building as the Guildhall. In the end, success rewarded her efforts, and one of the most efficient female choirs that has ever been heard in public was the result.

I little knew, when the choir had been formed, that indirectly it would lead to the production of a work of mine at one of the great musical festivals. Yet such was the case; for one day Mr. Weist Hill asked me to compose a cantata for this choir. The proposal was made to me a year or two after my "Building of the Ship" had been produced at the Leeds Festival.

Hill's request resulted in my commencing a

cantata for female voices on the subject of the "Wishing Bell," of which I will say more later on.

Mr. Weist Hill was very anxious for me to get the cantata ready for his choir as soon as possible. Who knows, perhaps, that he may have had a foreboding that, if I delayed too long, he might never live to hear it?

Some portions of the cantata were, nevertheless, written during his lifetime; but his death caused me for a while to lose interest in it.

As regards the choir, it continued for many years to be an important feature at the Students' Concerts.

CHAPTER XXII

THE GUILDHALL SCHOOL—THE NEW BUILDING

I HAVE already alluded to the difficulties the School had to contend with in regard to the want of sufficient accommodation at the Aldermanbury premises. The Corporation therefore decided to erect a building especially for it, and a site was chosen on the Victoria Embankment.

Few of the professors and students heard much about the new building until it was completed. Most of us saw it, as I did, for the first time on the day of its opening by the Lord Mayor, in state, in the year 1887.

It appeared to us almost as if some good magician had used his magic wand and, in one night, had raised up this structure for our mutual benefit.

How different it seemed from the homely rooms in Aldermanbury; how much more official and businesslike. There were excellent ideas, too, well

carried out. Convenient rooms for the Principal and Secretary, and offices for the Chief Clerk and his staff; then a separate cash department, where the students pay their fees, and in which they may well imagine themselves to be at a bank handing in their deposits for investment. Well! after all—those who are studying for the profession would not be far out in thinking so. For is not the money they are paying, in a way, laid out to interest whereby, later on, when they have left the School, they may reap the reward of what they have spent both in time and money by becoming successful members of the musical profession? And even those students who enter the School with no other object than studying as amateurs, may certainly regard the fees they are handing over as likely to lead to good results; since, of all accomplishments, music is the one most available in society. Besides which, the amateur who has had the privilege of receiving a sound musical education may do much towards disseminating a love for our art.

At the Guildhall School these non-professional students are very numerous. Those who attend the various musical classes during the earlier hours of the day are almost exclusively ladies. It is in the evening, when the office-hours are over, that one sees in the class-rooms gentlemen who have been engaged during the day in business

showing their enthusiasm for musical art in a very practical manner.

One would think that at the end of a long day's work little energy would be left for so all-absorbing a subject as music. Where, however, there is true love and enthusiasm for art, all obstacles seem to yield to it, just as we read of some of the great composers who in their childhood had been forbidden to devote any time to music, practising in secret, nay even in the middle of the night, as did the boy Handel.

A noticeable feature throughout the new building which has been admirably carried out is the system of double doors to the classrooms, each fitted with plate-glass windows. These doors are practically sound-proof; for when one enters the School no strains of music are to be heard, although there may be fifty or more students playing or singing at the same time. Even when passing close by a room where perhaps a lady student is singing, one sees her through the glass windows of the double doors, her mouth wide opened, yet not a sound gratifies one's curiosity. In another room a violinist is using his bow energetically upon his instrument, but it might be covered with grease instead of resin, for not a note is audible.

The secret of this sound isolation is no doubt

due to the air enclosed between the two doors, which acts as a non-conductor to the vibrations.

The opening ceremony of the new building by the Lord Mayor proved to be a great success. All who were present on this auspicious occasion concurred in their estimate of the building as being splendidly adapted in every way for a music-school; and both professors and students felt how much they owed to the generosity of the Corporation, which spared no expense in erecting a structure that should in every way add to their comfort and convenience for all future years. Certainly, if the scheme inaugurated by the Music Deputation had not been thus liberally carried out by the Corporation, it would have required a very omnipotent magician to have called into existence so substantial a building.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE GUILDHALL SCHOOL—"ARS LONGA, VITA BREVIS"

IN the early history of a great undertaking there is often much interest to be found in the records of the various difficulties that have had to be overcome before the aims of its promoters could efficiently be carried out. But when success has become an accomplished fact, strange to say, much of this interest disappears. So it was with the Guildhall School of Music. When it had entered upon its work in the new building, and for about four years after, dating from the opening ceremony, no event of importance took place to disturb the routine of the School.

Those few years, however, are intimately associated with the memory of some of my fellow-professors who did good work in their time, but who are now at rest. Among these I recall Ridley Prentice, an excellent pianist and a thorough musician. Then I well remember Signor Li Calsi, pianist and composer, who, when a young man,

came to England in company with Thalberg. Another notable professor was Thomas Wingham, a most earnest composer, who wrote a charming serenade for orchestra, which was produced at the Philharmonic in 1885. Wingham was for several years the conductor of the music at the Brompton Oratory. Whilst there, he revived an ancient musical custom called Oratorio. This was really a kind of concert given in the church, followed by prayers and a sermon, and is said to have been the origin of sacred works of that name. I had an opportunity of being present at one of these early forms of oratorio, at which Wingham had asked me to assist and play in my Trio in C Minor. This performance took place in the chapel known as the Little Oratory. A grand piano had been brought into the choir, although there was barely room for it. In conjunction with a violinist and a 'cellist we went through the whole of the trio. It seemed strange for us to be playing a *scherzo* with tripping rhythms in a sacred edifice. At the conclusion of the concert and service we migrated into the refectory of the Oratory and dined with the Oratorians. Before going in, Wingham told me that no conversation was allowed during dinner. But from a kind of rostrum at one side of the refectory, one of the brothers read aloud disserta-

tions upon points of discussion connected with religion, affording food for reflection. Altogether I was much impressed with this glimpse into the mode of life of the Oratorians.

During the last year of Weist Hill's principalship of the School he suffered much from ill-health; although, notwithstanding, he worked perhaps harder than ever. After his death, which occurred in 1891, the Corporation elected Joseph Barnby as Principal. I had known Barnby for many years, so that his appointment to this important post was most welcome to me. He had been a fellow-student of mine at the Royal Academy of Music, and at the Novello Concerts, of which I have already spoken, we had renewed the acquaintance formed when we were students.

I recollect a very agreeable evening that I spent in his house at Eton on the occasion of a performance of my "Ancient Mariner" by the Eton boys. I dined with him before the performance, and after dinner he asked me to play something to him, and seemed quite glad to find, as he said, that "my fingers had not lost any of their dexterity."

I played to him my three Impromptus which are dedicated to Ferdinand Hiller.

As a proof of his wonderful quickness of ear in detecting anything wrong, when I had finished the second Impromptu he said, "I think I heard

some hidden octaves somewhere." So I played it through again, when he stopped me, and I had to admit that he was right. Consequently, in the next edition of these pieces I thought it worth while to make a slight alteration in the position of one of the chords, which effectually did away with this blemish.

At the performance of my "Ancient Mariner" by the boys, as the orchestra was not complete, I filled in some missing wind instruments on the harmonium, and I understood from some of those present that the *tout ensemble* was most satisfactory. I was delighted with the zeal, and I may say enthusiasm, that the boys evinced in their singing of the cantata.

After the concert I returned with Barnby to his house, and I recollect having a very interesting conversation with him, while we were seated in the chimney corner of the kitchen. This kitchen possessed an old-fashioned fireplace with seats close to the fire, such as one finds in old farm-houses, and for that reason he often adjourned there in the evening to smoke his cigar.

Barnby had that racy style of conversation that enlisted one's sympathy in all he said. His ideas and pronouncements were clearly expressed, and there was much information to be gained from him in matters concerning musical art.

It was too late for me to return to London after the concert, as I had originally intended, and he asked me to stay the night, but having no room to spare, he had arranged that I should sleep at the house of one of his friends. Not expecting to remain overnight, on the following morning I found myself minus the necessary razor for removing the growth of beard which, like the mushroom, in one night springs up amazingly. I descended to the breakfast-room feeling that I appeared careless indeed as to my personal appearance.

Before calling to bid Mrs. Barnby farewell, I took the opportunity to find a skilful expert of the same calling as that of the Barber of Seville; but I fear I disappointed him in a natural desire to display his skill, for I asked him to lend me a razor wherewith to perform the operation myself, whilst he looked on, doubtless with professional contempt at my homely methods.

This reminds me of an incident that occurred to George Watson, the first Registrar of the Royal College of Music.

He told me that he went one day to a barber to be shaved, when that individual, after regarding him with a curious expression, exclaimed, "I feel somehow as if I should like to draw the razor across your throat!" At this Watson made one dash for the door, and reached the street safely, but without

his hat, which in his precipitate retreat he abandoned.

After my visit to Eton, I only saw Barnby occasionally in the artists' room of the Albert Hall, between the parts of the concert of the great Choral Society he conducted, now known as the Royal Choral Society. It was not, indeed, until after his appointment as Principal at the Guildhall School of Music, that I had an opportunity of renewing my acquaintance with him. He had then become Sir Joseph, for he received the honour of knighthood a few months after his election as Principal.

This election, which took place in 1892, was the first contest for the important post of Principal of the School that had ever taken place, as Mr. Weist Hill was appointed without going through the ceremony of an election.

A considerable number of candidates offered themselves on the occasion, among whom were many most distinguished musicians; but the contest lay virtually between Joseph Barnby and William Cusins.

It was a passage of arms between two conductors, both well equipped as to prestige. For was not one the conductor of London's representative Choral Society, and the other the *chef d'orchestre* of the Philharmonic Society and Master of Music to the Queen?

At the meeting of the Corporation, before whom these musicians appeared, it soon became apparent that the scale was turning in favour of the great choral conductor. Mr. W. Cusins then wisely obviated the necessity for putting the matter to vote by resigning his candidature, and leaving the Corporation an easy task in their choice of the Principal.

Sir Joseph Barnby was not long in entering upon his varied duties as head of the Guildhall School. He threw himself heart and soul into his work, and of that there was no lack. Examining students; conducting orchestral and choral practices, as well as public performances at the concerts or operas given by the School. These, indeed, are but a few of the duties that fall to the lot of the Principal. For not only has he to hear the complaints of ambitious pupils who think they are not pushed sufficiently forward, but what is still more trying, he has to undergo interviews with their nearest relatives!

All this worry and work seemed to be borne by Sir Joseph with perfect equanimity, for whenever I saw him after luncheon, in the smoking-room of the Salisbury Hotel, I generally found him enjoying a cigar and showing no sign of fatigue or ennui. Nevertheless, as time went on, I think the work began to tell upon him. He seemed to take things

too greatly to heart. His anxiety for the prosperity of the School caused him to be ever devising schemes for its further advancement; added to which were his duties as conductor of the Royal Choral Society, and the composing and editing of sacred works. The strain was evidently too heavy, for about two years after he had been made Principal we heard that he was seriously ill.

I recollect calling at St. George's Square to inquire how he was, and seeing his daughter Muriel, who had been receiving an endless number of callers, each of whom she saw individually and reassured, as well as she could, for her father was still in danger. Happily he recovered from this attack, and after a few weeks seemed quite to have returned to his usual health. Certainly he showed no signs of loss of energy, since he had scarcely resumed his duties at the School when he convened a meeting of the professors to obtain their opinion in regard to some proposition he had to put before them. It was evident that he did not intend to spare himself, notwithstanding his recent illness. He undertook as many practices, both choral and instrumental; and the School concerts as well as the annual operatic performance were conducted by him as hitherto.

I saw him at the Salisbury Hotel perhaps more frequently after his illness than I had done before.

I found no change in him; in fact he looked quite hale and hearty. In figure he was inclined to be somewhat portly, though not too much so. His fine open expression of face betokened much character and gave him a distinguished appearance. Some such estimate of his personality was uppermost in my mind as I talked to him one morning at the Salisbury Hotel. I happened to allude to the enormous amount of work he had to accomplish at the Guildhall School, when he said, very impressively: "I often think, Barnett, that I am doing more work than I ought to do, what with my duties at the School and elsewhere; and the danger in this is, that one does not always feel the bad effects of it until some time afterwards, and then it is perhaps too late to repair the evil caused by overwork."

This was the last occasion on which I saw him, and, so far as I can recollect, the last words I heard him speak. Alas! how prophetic they were. He little thought at the time that the "afterwards" was only too near at hand! It was but a few days later that I was at work at the Guildhall School, when I learnt that again he had been taken seriously ill. An hour or two after a telegram was received by the secretary announcing his sudden death.

At the time, the professors—myself among them

—were engaged at their teaching duties. The sad news was not long in circulating throughout the School. Then the sounds of music that had filled the classrooms were hushed as by mutual consent; the stillness and silence of death seemed to be upon us all. We spoke to one another in whispers, as though we were in the chamber of death.

With the other professors I attended the funeral service held at St. Paul's, and, with the chief mourners, we formed a procession up the grand aisle. When we arrived under the dome we sat down and listened to the impressive choral service that followed.

How solemn in effect were the harmonies of the choir that echoed through the great cathedral. They recalled to me the feelings I experienced when I heard the choristers in Westminster Abbey singing that beautiful anthem, "God is a Spirit," at the obsequies of Sir Sterndale Bennett on 6 February, 1875.

. . . . . .

Work, with its usual busy routine, was soon resumed at the Guildhall School. For a few months it was carried on by the secretary, then Mr. Hilton Carter. Mr. Charles P. Smith, our former loved and esteemed secretary, who had done so much to further the interests of the

School, having been claimed by death during Sir Joseph Barnby's short principalship.

The election of the third Principal of the School was conducted on the same lines as the previous election, and was very closely contested, the Corporation in the end selecting Mr. (now Dr.) W. H. Cummings, who was at that time one of the most popular professors of the School. In selecting from the teaching staff, they showed their wisdom, for Mr. Cummings was more likely to be familiar with the working and requirements of the School than an outsider could possibly have been. As Treasurer of the Royal Society of Musicians, and of the Philharmonic Society, his business capacities had been thoroughly tested, whilst as a musician of varied attainments and vast experience he had long before made his mark.

CHAPTER XXIV

WELSH HOLIDAYS—SNOWDON

IN speaking of the daily routine of the Guildhall School, with its ever-recurring programme of work, many perhaps will think that the professors must have a hard time indeed, especially as some among their number, like myself, are engaged in other institutions.

During the term, the work that the professor has to accomplish is, no doubt, very arduous; but he enjoys one great advantage which is not shared by those engaged in business pursuits. A fortnight's holiday is about as much as the City man can afford to take from his work; whereas the musical professor has a very liberal margin allowed to him for his summer excursions. The allowance, in fact, is so liberal, that he could easily go to South Africa and back during the time.

Many of my vacations have been spent in different parts of Wales and its neighbourhood, and about some of these I propose to give a description and record my impressions.

The first holiday I spent in Wales was a good many years ago, somewhere between my return from Germany and the production of my "Ancient Mariner."

It so happened that a young friend of mine, Mr. W., whose society I always enjoyed, had arranged to go with his sister for a short tour in North Wales, and he asked me whether I would accompany them.

Never having been in the principality before, his proposition was very welcome to me; I was obliged, however, to limit the time I could devote to the trip to a week, owing to the date fixed for my eldest sister's wedding, at which I had to be present.

My stay in Wales being so short, I resolved not to encumber myself with any luggage, but just to take a small handbag containing what I thought necessary. It will be seen later on that this light mode of equipment, although it gave me greater freedom, was not unattended with certain risks.

I met my friend and his sister at an hotel in Llangollen, and as I arrived there after dark I had to wait until the following morning to satisfy my yearning for seeing the beautiful scenery of which I had heard so much.

I rose early, and from my window, whilst dressing, I caught a glimpse of the turbulent river

which, swollen by heavy rains, poured its foaming waters under the arches of a picturesque bridge, losing itself among the rocks and boulders.

Fortunately for us, the waterfalls and cascades were then in fine form, as the weather had been for some weeks previously the reverse of dry. We had, nevertheless, a fine day to start with, and in the morning we ascended the highest hill near Llangollen, from the summit of which we obtained a splendid view of the surrounding country, and after we had returned to the hotel and had partaken of some lunch, we were in time for the Llanberis coach, which was to convey us to Capel Cwrig. It was in this primitive hamlet that we intended to pass the week, making such excursions as the weather might permit, one of which was to ascend Snowdon itself.

We put up at a little inn which was close to many interesting bits of typical Welsh scenery. One or two of these I added to my sketch-book,[1] and I commenced the view of Moel Siabod, which was opposite our inn; but I found it very complicated. I am ashamed to say that this sketch still remains unfinished.

Of course we went to Bettws-y-Coed and saw the Swallow Falls and the Miner's Bridge; but

[1] In my boyhood I had studied water-colour and pencil sketching with William Varley, the artist whom I alluded to in my introductory pages.

these are so well known that description is unnecessary. We also made an excursion to the fairy-like Lake Ogwen, and explored the wild and rocky region which is adjacent to it. It proved to be very rough work climbing amidst these rugged mountains; but we went as far as the "Devil's Kitchen." With this I was disappointed, for it did not look nearly diabolical enough. I was told that in order to convey this sinister impression it should be seen in the gloom of a coming thunderstorm, the absence of which, notwithstanding, I did not deplore, as it happened to be one of the finest days we had during the week.

The ascent of Snowdon we put off until the last day of our visit, which happened to be a Sunday. All through the week we had been looking forward to this excursion, and, as the day opened with a fine morning, we determined upon making the ascent. We had the aid of a guide, and a pony, which was intended for Miss W.

We started in good spirits, and commenced the ascent in brilliant sunshine. W. and myself found it hard work, for the ascent from Capel Cwrig is very difficult, but as it affords some of the grandest views known in Welsh scenery it is well worth the toil it costs.

We had reached a point commanding a fine view of the scenic panorama about which the

guide already had given us a glowing description. We were exulting over the beautiful scene that the grand old mountain had set before us, when the fair view began gradually to fade away until it was entirely hidden by mist. This we thought would soon disappear, as it might be only a drifting cloud. Unfortunately, the mist not only refused to clear away, but gradually developed into a drizzle. Still we did not lose hope that the weather would mend; but to our disappointment the drizzle increased to rain. We could now see naught except objects immediately before us, so that our only occupation was to follow the guide, who did his best to reassure us regarding the prospect of the weather clearing.

At last we arrived at the little cabin on the summit of Snowdon that bore the inappropriate name of an hotel. It was a wretched little place, but we were thankful for the protection it afforded us, for it was then raining in torrents.

Whilst I was sitting down to rest a gentleman turned to me and said, "Hallo! Mr. Barnett, who would have thought of seeing you here? Allow me to introduce myself, as I know your father well. I am Henry Lincoln, and am musical critic of the 'Daily News.'" We then entered into conversation, and were both extremely amused at the idea of our meeting for the first time at the top of Snowdon.

After waiting and waiting, in the hope that the storm would give some signs of ceasing, W. and I decided upon our little party descending the mountain by the Llanberis side. This indeed had been part of our programme, as we intended to have explored the lake and pass of Llanberis.

The descent would have been easy work but for the rain; the wind, too, was so high that my umbrella was blown to shreds, and, becoming utterly useless, I threw it away.

When we arrived at Llanberis, the guide took us to the house of a friend of his, who promised to provide us with a dog-cart to take us back to Capel Cwrig, fourteen miles distant. We dried ourselves as well as we could at the kitchen fire whilst waiting for our conveyance.

Before starting, the guide and his friend did all they could to protect us from the weather, by the aid of horsecloths and other wraps. These proved to be of little use against the deluge of rain which soaked through everything; so that when we reached our inn we were as wet as though we had been fished out of a river.

Not having a change of attire with me, I at once went to bed, giving instructions for my clothes and boots to be dried at the fire during the night.

I rose early the next morning in order to

catch the stage-coach going to Llanrwst, at that time the nearest railway-station. This was the only coach that ran during the day, and if I had missed it I should have been too late for my sister's wedding, which was to take place on the following morning.

I had not allowed myself much time, so my friend W. promised to stand at the door ready to stop the coach as it came down the hill.

Meanwhile, I was in a most unenviable position, for I was endeavouring vainly to get my feet into my boots—the only pair I had with me.

These boots were of a pattern but little worn now. They were Wellington top-boots, reaching half-way up the leg. They were saturated when I left them to be dried, and the servant, thoughtlessly, had placed them too near the fire, which had shrunken the leather to such an extent that, do what I would, it was impossible to force a way into them.

Whilst exhausting myself in vain efforts, I heard the distant rumbling of the approaching coach. In desperation I took my penknife and cut away the upper part of the boots, converting them into shoes. Even in that condition they were far too small to get on. The coach was now at the door. I called to my friend, telling him of my predicament, for I could hardly travel shoeless to London.

He thereupon lent me a pair of buckle-shoes he had with him; and although they were rather small for me, I was never more grateful in my life than I was for the loan of those buckle-shoes, as they saved the situation. I got my feet into them as well as I could, made one rush from the door of the inn to the coach, just as the driver, in his impatience, was on the point of starting. I had scarcely time to say good-bye to my friends; in fact, we were all laughing so heartily at my undignified exit that words were drowned in laughter.

CHAPTER XXV

WELSH HOLIDAYS—A FLOOD

FOR several years after my visit to Capel Cwrig I always spent my summer holidays in Wales, and generally prolonged my stay to within a few days of the commencement of my engagements in London. But once every three years, notwithstanding the attractions of fine scenery, I did not hesitate to shorten my holiday, in order to be present at the Birmingham Festival, which was then held about the end of August.

During one of my Welsh trips, previous to the Festival of 1879, I was staying with my wife[1] at Penmaenmawr; our plan being to remain there three weeks, and then go on to Birmingham in time for the Festival.

The first few days of our visit to this picturesque place were very enjoyable, as we had some fine weather, and were thus able to explore the Sychnant Pass which, with its winding terrace-road, affords so many enchanting views.

[1] This was my first wife, whose maiden name was Alice Dora Booth, and whom I married in 1875. She was the daughter of Lorenzo John Booth, a clever artist. She died in the year 1882.

At the foot of the mountain which overshadows this pass lies a deep valley, so deep that one is surprised to find no water in it. Owing to this peculiarity it is called the "Dry Valley."

It could not have been long after our excursion to this region that the terrible floods set in, which made the summer of 1879 a memorable one for Wales. The so-called "Dry Valley" must then have belied its name.

We were at this time still at Penmaenmawr. It was fortunate for us that we had chosen so elevated a spot for pitching our holiday tent, for if we had selected one of the vales instead of a mountain, we should not have enjoyed our experience. As it was, notwithstanding its high position, many houses in Penmaenmawr were flooded. Where we were lodged we escaped this inconvenience; but in the house opposite, the hall, as far as the staircase, appeared to be a running stream of water.

During the three or four days of incessant rain we spent most of our time in watching the swirling flood, as it poured down the road in its heedless course like a mountain torrent.

This same flood, we were told, had converted insignificant streams into mighty rivers, whose waters moved with an unnatural and deadly velocity, carrying all before them with relentless force. It was one of those small streams which, in a dry season,

one could step across, that, swelled by the flood into an irresistible torrent, washed away the entire viaduct of Llandulus.[1]

Fortunately no train was passing over it at the time, otherwise a disaster would have occurred rivalling in magnitude some of those appalling railway accidents in America.

I am here reminded of a charming episode that occurred several years ago in the United States, when a train was saved from destruction by a little girl only eight years of age. The incident took place not far from a station, at a part of the country where a river is spanned by a railway-bridge. The child (the daughter of the station-master) happened at the time to be on the bank of the river close to the bridge, and was watching the turbulent waters eddying under its arches, when to her terror, without any warning, the structure gave way before her eyes. At the same moment she heard the whistle, and, turning, saw in the distance a train approaching and nearing its doom. Without an instant's hesitation she snatched off her little red skirt and, running on to the line, waved it to and fro as a signal of danger. The engine-driver, fortunately, understood it as such, and was able to pull up in time to save his train from being precipitated into the river.

[1] This viaduct consisted of about sixteen arches, and the catastrophe took place on 17 August, 1879.

I have no doubt there were several narrow escapes in Wales during the great flood of 1879. Besides the viaduct of Llandulus numerous bridges were destroyed, among these being the bridge of Aber, a massive stone construction. This was very unfortunate for Penmaenmawr, as railway communication had already been cut off on one side by the Llandulus disaster. Now that the bridge of Aber had likewise succumbed, we were absolutely severed from all communication with the outer world. In consequence, we received neither letters nor newspapers. Our supplies in regard to milk and other necessaries of life ran short, so that, in a mild way, we tasted some of the experiences of a beleaguered town.

Luckily for us, the rain ceased in time for our journey to Birmingham.

Owing to the destruction of the viaduct between Colwyn and Abergele, when we arrived at Colwyn we had to leave the train and find some conveyance to take us to Abergele, in order to resume our journey. As to this there was no difficulty, for the railway company had made ample arrangements for carrying their passengers over the break in the line, a distance of about four miles.

I do not think I ever saw, before or since, such a motley collection of vehicles. It seemed as if all the old and disused omnibuses had been sought

out, after their existence had been wellnigh forgotten. Then there were dog-carts, tradesmen's carts, victorias, cabs, and four-in-hand brakes drawn by two horses, all looking equally shabby and out of date.

In spite of their unattractive appearance the rush for them was great. It was quite a scramble of every one for himself, for we were all afraid of being left behind and so losing the train. We succeeded in getting a dog-cart. Whilst on our way a boy ran after it, and told us some of the experiences he had had at Abergele, where he was staying. He said that, in consequence of the bakers' ovens being flooded, the visitors had been without bread for many days, and had been obliged to put up with a substitute in the form of thin cakes made of flour and water, fried in pans. These I expect very much resembled a specimen of bread a friend of mine once brought with him as a curiosity from Norway, and which looked more like the bottom of a bandbox than anything edible.

During our journey to Birmingham we wondered what had become of our boxes. The last we had seen of them was at Colwyn Station, where we had left them amid a huge pile of trunks, portmanteaux, and luggage of every description, strewn about in the wildest confusion. On reaching our destination, therefore, we were not unprepared to

hear that our luggage could not arrive until the following day. How our boxes ever found their way to Birmingham was a mystery! But, fortunately, they succeeded in doing so, for when we called at the station the next morning we espied them awaiting, and were thus able to go to the first performance of the Festival in more suitable attire than a travelling get-up.

CHAPTER XXVI

WELSH HOLIDAYS—MUSIC O'ER THE LAKE—TRESPASSERS—AN AWKWARD DESCENT

AMONG the places in Wales that possess the greatest attraction for me, none surpasses in beauty that of Barmouth and the surrounding neighbourhood.

My earliest visit to Barmouth was just prior to the Hereford Festival at which my "Raising of Lazarus" was performed.

On the occasion of another visit to this town we found my friend W. and his sister staying there. W. was very fond of boating, and as in calm weather the estuary of the Maudach is like a smooth lake, it afforded him splendid opportunities for enjoying this pastime.

Hearing one day that he and his sister were going to row on the Maudach, I thought I would give them an agreeable surprise. My father and three of my sisters were with me at the time, and we directed our steps from Barmouth along a bridle-path parallel to and overlooking the

Dolgelly road which skirts the estuary. The path here is fringed with trees, and between them every now and then we obtained beautiful views of the placid lake-like scene beneath, bounded by the many-tinted mountains.

Presently, in the distance, we saw the boat approaching that contained our friends; so we hid ourselves behind some of the trees and bushes, and then we arranged to sing as much of the opening chorus from my "Ancient Mariner" as we could recollect. Two of my sisters were to take the soprano part, the other the alto, my father the tenor, whilst I was to sing bass.

When the boat was sufficiently near, I gave the signal to commence, and by the aid of our memory we sang through the whole of the chorus.

When, later in the day, we met my friends, they told us that they had had a really charming experience, for our little vocal performance, coming unexpectedly, produced a most fairy-like effect. Our voices passed over the smooth surface of the waters and blended in such a manner as to make the tone sound quite silvery and ethereal.

. . . . . .

To me, in these mountainous districts where civilization has not parcelled up the country into roads and fields, one of the most delightful sensations is to find myself in a wild region midst wood and

dale, where, as far as the eye can see, no trace is visible of the ever-busy hand of man.

Every day it becomes more difficult to find such romantic scenes. Many a *local* that afforded fine opportunities for indulging unmolested in the love of nature, on revisiting, I have found enclosed, and a respectable family mansion erected on it, surrounded by grounds. The annoying part of this arrangement is, that the site selected is always the one where the most beautiful view could be obtained, and henceforth it is shut out from the gaze of the visitor by an ugly wall, too high even to look over; while, to add insult to injury, one sees a board with the words painted upon it, "Trespassers will be prosecuted with the utmost rigour of the law."

In many parts of North Wales it is most difficult to know whether you are trespassing or not; for the low walls constructed of loose stones, which take the place of our hedges in England, and which mark the boundaries of farms, are not infrequently so arranged that, whether you are inside or outside an enclosure, is quite a puzzle.

I remember one day, when we were rambling in the wild mountainous regions near Little Borth, where these walls abound, we came across some very tempting blackberry bushes. My father, my sisters, and my children were with me, and most

of us availed ourselves of the rustic dessert Nature had provided by picking the blackberries, which were particularly fine. We had no idea at the time that we were actually trespassing on one of the enclosures belonging to a small farmer; and when we heard from the valley beneath a man's angry voice calling threats, we were not in the least aware that he was addressing us. I was in fact rather interested in noticing what wonderful power of voice he possessed in making himself heard from such a distance. As his vocal efforts became alarmingly fierce in tone, it dawned upon me that he was addressing us, and moreover, that he was evidently not entering into the fun in the same spirit that we were; from which I concluded that perhaps we were trespassing upon his blackberry orchard. I tried to explain matters, but the distance prevented my words from reaching him, and he called out in a voice, the harsh, grating tones of which I have never heard equalled, "I will go and fetch a policeman!" This amazing threat tickled our fancy greatly, for the nearest place where this formidable officer of the law could be obtained was Portmadoc, at least three miles away.

Little Borth, which I have mentioned, and which is a fishing village, is about a mile from Portmadoc, and is beautifully situated upon the

estuary of the river. The fishermen, notwithstanding the small size of the cottages they inhabit, contrive to let rooms to tourists. These rooms were very well kept, but so tiny that, to have accommodated our party, I think we should have required that at least half a dozen of the cottages should have been placed at our disposal. Fortunately, we found ample accommodation in one of a block of three houses which had originally been an hotel, and opposite one of the finest examples of Welsh scenery that I know. The bay-window in the drawing-room had three separate views, each distinctive and interesting. From the centre of the window a grand panorama of the lake-like estuary presented itself, bounded by the distant mountains, near one of which the ruins of Harlech Castle could be discerned.

The dim outlines of the castle, as I saw them from afar, recalled to me an incident which occurred in connexion with it two or three years previously, and which is still fresh in my memory.

I had been often curious to explore the ruins of this mediæval stronghold, so that on one occasion, when we were staying at Barmouth, being comparatively near, we arranged an excursion to them.

This visit to Harlech Castle was full of interest for me, as not long before I had heard, for the first time, the celebrated "March of the Men of

Harlech," given with great effect at the inaugural Welsh Concert at St. James's Hall, under the baton of Mr. John Thomas. Whether this influenced me or not, I cannot say, but I determined if possible to leave no part of the castle unexplored. My enthusiasm might, however, have cost me dear.

We had been round the ramparts, when I noticed a little wooden bridge leading over a gap that led to an opening by which entrance could be obtained to the watch-tower, and which is the most elevated part of the structure. I proposed ascending it; but my father and sisters thought it dangerous, and were too nervous to attempt it. I accordingly crossed over the wooden bridge, entered the tower, and began to ascend the stone steps that led to the top. These were very rough and irregular, and so broken away that the greater number of them were not more than two feet in width.

When I had climbed nearly to the summit of the tower, it occurred to me that I should have to go down again, and that the process of descending might be a hazardous undertaking. Accordingly, I thought it wiser to proceed no farther. On turning, I saw at once the danger I was in. From where I stood there was a sheer descent of some two hundred feet to the basement of the castle.

The steps by which I had to make my way downwards were barely wide enough for even one person to walk upon; they were likewise so broken away that it was very difficult to get anything like a sure footing upon them. One slip or false step would have precipitated me to the bottom. There was no rail or balustrade by which to steady myself. I paused, and debated in my mind as to which mode of descent would be attended with least danger. To crawl down backwards was rather ignominious. I consequently resolved to face the danger and walk down manfully, keeping as close to the wall as possible, and taking care that every step was well planted. It was as much as I could do to keep my steadiness of nerve and avoid any feeling of giddiness that might be caused by the great depth I saw beneath me, and which probably would have brought on an attack of vertigo. If for one moment I had given way to such a feeling all would have been over with me, and certainly I should not be writing my experience of it at the present moment. But I fortunately succeeded in controlling my nerves. When at last I emerged from the opening in the tower and stood again upon the wooden bridge, my father and my sisters, anxiously awaiting my reappearance, exclaimed: "Why, John, you look as if you had seen a ghost!"

[*Photograph by Barrauds Ltd.*

JOHN FRANCIS BARNETT

CHAPTER XXVII

CHEPSTOW—A RUSTIC CEREMONY—ASTRAY!—MEETING IN THE FARMHOUSE

I HOPE my readers will not think that I am bent upon giving a detailed account of my visits to all the castles that I have been over; but I must ask indulgence for devoting some space to one of my holiday excursions, on which occasion I stayed some weeks at Chepstow, and, of course, explored the ruins of the celebrated castle which is one of the principal attractions of the place.

My sojourn in the charming neighbourhood of Chepstow has impressed itself upon my memory, not only on account of the picturesque character of its castle, but likewise owing to two or three incidents that occurred during the time.

We stayed at a farm-house on Tat's Hill, which is close to Chepstow, on the opposite side of the River Wye. It was an old and primitive place, and evidently had been the largest of its kind in the locality. From the dining-room window a beautiful distant view was obtained of a spot in the

landscape where the waters of the Wye and Severn meet. It was, perhaps, rather spoilt in the foreground by the tubular bridge through which the railway runs, this iron structure being so peculiar in form that it looks as though the engineer had by mistake erected it upside down.

Our water-supply at this farm was rather a novel feature. It was contained in an underground tank of huge proportions, into which was collected the rain-water from the roofs of the house and adjoining buildings. We understood that the people of the village used to come to the farm for water, so that the huge tank harboured there formed a kind of reservoir for the neighbourhood.

Contrary to what might have been expected, the water was beautifully clear and very pure and soft, and, I think, agreed with us all the better for being devoid of lime or other mineral properties. It was, likewise, as cold as spring water, even in the hottest weather.

We found everything in the way of food wonderfully cheap at Chepstow, especially salmon, which we used to buy at one of the reaches belonging to a gentleman in the neighbourhood, and not unfrequently we saw the salmon caught that was afterwards to be served at our dinner.

The arrangements at the farm for the boiling of fish were not altogether satisfactory; for one day,

after we had been profuse in our eulogiums upon the delicious flavour of a very fine specimen of the king of fish, and had congratulated ourselves upon our good fortune in being at one of the headquarters of the salmon industry, our nerves received a severe shock, inasmuch as our landlady inadvertently disclosed to us that the salmon had been boiled in the scullery copper. As this old-fashioned contrivance for washing clothes was still used for that purpose, it not a little disconcerted us. After this unpleasant discovery, we lost no time in supplying the good woman with a fish kettle at our own expense.

One of the incidents that occurred during our visit to Chepstow was the ceremony of the opening of the castle grounds, or Castle Dell, as it is called, to the public by the Duke of Beaufort, on 11 August, 1886. This afforded an opportunity to the townspeople for organizing a procession through Chepstow. On a small scale, it reminded me of the one I witnessed in Leipsic on the centenary of Schiller's birth. The various industries were represented by the artisans belonging to them, working at their respective trades in wagons or caravans specially arranged for the occasion. These vehicles were tastefully decorated with flowers and emblems of the various trades represented, and were drawn by horses wearing favours.

It was a very pretty sight to watch this pastora procession wending its way through the quaint street in Chepstow, and passing under the antique archway by which the old town is entered. The men belonging to the various orders, known as those of the Foresters and the Band of Hope, sported their gayest uniforms on the occasion. Then there were young girls, prettily dressed and wearing garlands of flowers. Altogether the procession was rich in colour and variety. Presently one heard the distant music of a band approaching, and producing, as it came nearer and nearer, a very fine *crescendo*, which worked up to a splendid *forte* as it passed immediately opposite to us; and then again, as it disappeared under the old archway, an excellent effect of *diminuendo* was obtained, that might have served as a useful lesson to many an orchestra as to the manner in which a *diminuendo* should be managed.

When the procession had passed we went into the castle grounds that had just been declared free to the public. They form a permanent addition to the attractions of the town, being like a sylvan park in miniature.

We had previously been over the castle itself, which is so well known as to render a minute description superfluous.

On entering the ruins of Chepstow Castle one

does not experience that depressing feeling which such time-worn and dilapidated buildings are apt to inspire. The ivy-clad walls and towers are quite ornate in appearance; then there is a magnificent walnut tree, whose spreading branches cast their shadows on a well-kept lawn. All is peaceful and soothing to the eye, so that one can scarcely realize that in the remote past many a prisoner may have pined away in some dark or gloomy dungeon, or may have met his fate by being secretly put away. There is, however, one dungeon that certainly conveys the impression that dark deeds may have been perpetrated in it, and that it may possibly have been an *oubliette*. It, moreover, on one side, presents an unprotected opening through which any prisoner, either by accident or force, could easily have been precipitated into the river. As we looked down this awful gap, which, when we saw it, was unprotected, we could see the swirling and rushing waters of the Wye hurrying on their headlong course, and we could easily appreciate how effective a means it must have been for getting rid of a troublesome enemy or rival in love. For any one falling into the rapids of the river would be carried by the current into the great Severn, and lost to view for ever.

Few rivers can boast of such romantic scenery

as the Wye, in the vicinity of Chepstow. Rich foliage and broken outlines of rocky cliffs mingle together apparently in wild discord, and yet they form a harmonious whole that is absolutely perfect. It is strange that this mêlée of rock and woodland, which some freak of nature has scattered haphazard, should, with the swift-flowing river, combine to form a picture which the eye loves to dwell upon, and which conjures up thoughts of romance. Yet so it is, and it is one of those mysteries, akin to music itself, which defies solution, and which would rack the brains of the most profound philosopher to build up a tangible theory of explanation.

At Tat's Hill we had a fine opportunity of realizing the scenic effects I have described, as, quite close to where we were staying, there is a terrace-walk, hewn out of the cliffs that skirt the river, commanding one of the grandest views in the neighbourhood. The way to this fine point of observation was through the grounds of an adjoining house, which belonged to an old lady who gave permission to visitors to explore the surroundings amidst which she dwelt.

First we went through the pretty garden near the house, but by a little detour we soon came upon the terrace-walk to which I have just alluded. There we found ourselves perched up half-way

between the top and the base of the cliffs, on a narrow and unprotected pathway overhanging the river. Although not nearly so dangerous as the broken steps in the watch-tower of Harlech Castle, it still demanded caution, but the reward for any possible danger was immeasurably greater. In the watch-tower there was nothing to be seen but gloomy walls and a cavernous depth, whereas from where we stood a glorious panorama unfolded itself. I should certainly have enjoyed the view still better had my children not been with me, for I was constantly enjoining them to exercise caution, with such admonitions as "Keep close to the rocks!" "Walk only one at a time!" and I felt greatly relieved when we had passed over this rocky ledge. I think, however, that when we explored the river from the opposite side a few days after we ran a greater risk, but of another kind.

Access to this side of the river is obtained by passing through the grounds which adjoin a house situated on the road to Tintern. This house is an ugly, square, white-painted building, and as it stands alone, without even a tree being near it, it affords an excellent landmark.

It was a fine afternoon when we started on our excursion, and it was not long before we found ourselves on the banks of the Wye, if the rough,

rocky pathway could be so called. From here we had an opportunity of seeing the river and its surroundings at closer quarters. All is as wild and solitary as it was hundreds of years ago. No one has been tempted to interfere or tamper with nature. Foxes and other wild animals roam about unmolested by the sportsman, for the ground is too rugged and broken for sport. The wily reynard is sly enough to know that here he is perfectly safe, so we frequently came across him in our rambles. The rustling music of the trees, swayed to and fro by the breeze, with now and then the note of some woodland songster, is accompanied by an ever-prolonged pedal note, as we musicians call it, emanating from the drone and hum of myriads of insects, attracted by the waters of the busy river flowing beneath. Their millions of tiny wings seem to accord in the sound vibrations they produce, conveying the effect of one note well defined. One might almost imagine that some mysterious instinct leads them to join in unison.

My father and my sisters, who were with me, entered fully into the poetry of this scene of river and woodland, but I think my children thought more of the blackberries, which were very abundant, and which were as large as mulberries. Altogether, we were spending a most enjoyable

alfresco afternoon, and were loath to turn back. When we did so, the shades of evening were gradually approaching, for the shorter days of a well-advanced September were already overtaking us.

On all excursions of this kind I have generally acted as guide, so that I took the precaution of making such observations of the different paths as would enable us to find our way safely back. But I must have made some mistake in returning, as the path that I chose, instead of leading us away from the river, brought us back to it at another point.

The situation was now becoming serious, for soon the light of the setting sun would have failed us. If we could not find our way by daylight, it was exceedingly improbable that we should do so in the darkness of night; added to this, my younger little daughter was growing so tired that alternately we had to carry her in order to progress at all. If I had had a pocket compass with me it would have been of great assistance, but all I could do then was to make for one of the other paths, from which there were several to choose. I exercised the wisest discretion I could call forth, and led our little party on until at length we were free of the wood, and found ourselves on rising ground covered with thick, coarse grass, so high that it might have been part of an Indian jungle.

Through this we had to wade as best we could, but, to our joy, on looking into the distance we saw the ugly white house which we had thought such an eyesore, but which was then more welcome to us than any of the beautiful scenes we had left behind.

All cause for alarm was now at an end, and it was not long before we were safe in our farm-house at Tat's Hill, resting our wearied limbs and reviving ourselves by the cup "which cheers but not inebriates."

During our stay at Chepstow an opportunity was afforded me of seeing again my uncle John Barnett, who together with his wife came over from Leckhampton, near Cheltenham, where they lived. This visit was in response to an invitation that we gave them to dine with us and spend the evening at the old farm-house.

I had not seen them for many years, so their coming was quite an event. My uncle at that time was well advanced in years, but looked, nevertheless, wonderfully young for his age. He was a most entertaining conversationalist, and it was a thousand pities that during the latter half of his life, living away from the world, almost in seclusion, few had the opportunity of enjoying his society and listening to the many well-told anecdotes he had at his disposal.

My uncle, as those versed in the history of English Opera can fully attest, was practically the founder of the romantic school of English Opera. Purcell, who may be looked upon as the Gluck of England, had, like the great Palatinate composer, immortalized himself by operatic works founded upon mythological subjects; but at the time my uncle gave forth his "Mountain Sylph" to the world, English Opera as high art was really non-existent. The so-called opera of that period was actually nothing more than a kind of melo-drama. If any chorus were introduced, it was generally sung without any appropriate action. Thus, in the first rehearsal of the "Mountain Sylph," my uncle told me that when the chorus, representing an angry crowd, was uttering threats against the wizard, Hela, the chorus singers sang their parts without the slightest attempt at any gesture indicative of anger; nor did the stage manager attempt to show them what they should do. Whereupon my uncle stepped upon the stage and personally illustrated how they should give life-like reality to the words they were singing. The effect was magical; it was like galvanizing a corpse! When the opera was produced, the audience for the first time saw a chorus acting as well as singing. It was quite a novel experience to them, and set off as the action was by spirited

and effective music, it went a great way towards ensuring the success of the opera.

Naturally, my uncle's success in his first opera caused him to write others; so that at not very long intervals apart appeared, first, "Fair Rosamund," and then "Farinelli." At a state performance of the latter opera, Queen Victoria was present. And here I will take the opportunity of narrating an interesting episode which occurred not many years ago at one of the concerts at Osborne given before the Queen. Sir Walter Parratt had included in the programme of this concert my "Liebeslied" for orchestra, and he told me that after the performance Her Majesty expressed to him, in graceful words, the pleasure this piece had given her, and asked if the composer was still living, evidently thinking it had been written by my uncle. For she alluded to the occasion on which she had heard John Barnett's "Farinelli." Sir Walter, of course, explained that the music of the "Liebeslied" was composed by the nephew of that composer, whom he often met at the Royal College of Music. This little incident showed how wonderfully retentive Queen Victoria's memory must have been, as she not only recollected my uncle's name, but likewise that of his opera, notwithstanding the many years that had elapsed since she had been present at its performance.

CHAPTER XXVIII

A CHAPTER OF ANECDOTES

THE recollection of my uncle John brings to my mind some of the anecdotes he was so fond of telling. He had quite a stock of them, and many were very amusing. I am sorry that I can only recall a few of them, my memory for anecdotes being nearly as bad as it is for riddles. I used to envy the wonderful facility Sir George Grove possessed in recollecting innumerable anecdotes and riddles. As for me, often, when I try to propound a riddle, I find myself beginning at the wrong end, and putting the answer in place of the question.

Notwithstanding my shortcomings as to memory, I will endeavour to recall some of the anecdotes I heard told me by my father and my uncle, and will include amongst them one or two incidents in which I myself took part. For as in my reminiscences I have not had the opportunity of describing any hairbreadth escapes or exciting scenes, a few anecdotes may not be unacceptable.

In any case, a chapter of anecdotes is better than a chapter of accidents.

I will commence with a very quaint episode that occurred during my uncle's childhood.

When he was about ten years old he was taken to a concert which took place in a theatre, in order that he might hear Braham, the renowned tenor. Braham had just sung "The Death of Nelson," when little John Barnett, who was in a box, to the great amusement of all assembled, called out at the top of his voice, "I think I can sing that song quite as well myself." "Let us hear the little fellow," said several of the audience; whereupon, the boy stood upon a seat, so that he could be seen by the audience, and sang the song in question most charmingly, and with such effect that the people rose to their feet with enthusiasm and applauded the little fellow to the echo. The manager of the theatre sent round at once to inquire who he was, and, that very evening, offered him an engagement at the theatre. Thus it was that, by an unlooked-for incident, the boy was introduced to the musical world.

At the time my uncle was writing his operas he had many admirers, but, on the other hand, others depreciated his compositions. Amongst the latter was a certain musical professor, who was always finding something amiss with what my

uncle wrote. This professor was a great lover of Mozart's works, and was continually parading his devotion to that immortal composer. A rather neat practical joke was played upon him by a gentleman, an acquaintance of his. This gentleman came in one day to the professor's rooms, and told him that he had brought a manuscript of Mozart with him, which he was desirous his friend should play over. Now this manuscript was nothing more nor less than a portion of one of my uncle's compositions, which a few days before he had lent to the professor's friend. The professor, believing the composition to be by Mozart, went into ecstasies of musical rapture, every now and then bursting forth into such ejaculations as "How charming!" "See what fine writing!"—and so forth. At last, the facetious friend, thinking that he had kept up the joke long enough, brought the Mozart admirer down from the celestial regions in which he was revelling to the prosaic sphere we dwell in, by telling him the plain truth—that the manuscript was written by my uncle. At this the professor's face fell, and all he said was, "Ha! Hem! Not at all bad for Barnett!"

Some men are very fond of boasting their acquaintanceship with men of note. One of my uncle's friends had this weakness. This gentleman happened to come in one afternoon, when my uncle

was giving a reception. He had not been long in the room before he began telling every one that he had had such a treat, as he had just come from his friend, John Cramer, who had been playing to him most delightfully for over an hour. As John Cramer was then the doyen of pianists, every one was, of course, most interested. A few minutes after, who should enter but John Cramer himself, when, after staying a few minutes, he apologized to my uncle for having to leave so soon. When he had gone, the gentleman who had boasted of being so intimate with the great pianist went up to my uncle and said, "Can you tell me, John, who is that gentleman who has just left? He seems to speak as if he knew a good deal about music." "Why," replied my uncle, "that is your old friend John Cramer, who was playing to you for over an hour before you came here." *Tableau.*

A little incident that occurred during my boyhood just comes to my memory. My father at that time frequently took me with him to the breaking-up parties given at the schools where he taught; for I suppose I was then regarded as being a child wonder, and my playing was looked forward to with great interest. One of these breaking-up entertainments to which we went took place at a school at Stamford Hill. After the concert was over, and an agreeable evening had been spent,

my father and myself slept the night at the school house, as it was too far for us to return to Kentish Town, where we lived. We shared the same bedroom, and my father before retiring to rest put his purse carefully under his pillow, having previously locked the door of the room. These precautions were not altogether without cause, as the purse contained over sixty pounds in bank-notes.

The next morning, when we had completed our toilet, and were about to descend to breakfast, my father felt under the pillow for his purse; but what was his consternation to find the purse gone. Was it possible he had forgotten to put it there? No, he recollected distinctly doing so. We tried the door; that was as securely locked as it had been the night previous. Then we commenced a minute search. We removed the pillow-cases, shaking them, as though it were likely a purse would cling to them. We took the sheets and blankets and shook them also. We carefully examined the bolsters and even the bedding. We looked under the bed, in fact we looked under everything that was in the room; but no purse was visible. We had been diligently searching for over an hour, and I was beginning to feel hungry. I suggested, therefore, our going down to breakfast and having another hunt afterwards. "No," said my father,

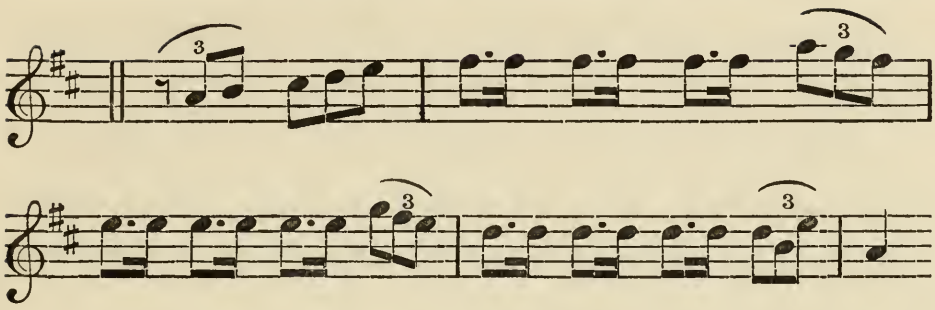
"if I leave the room now, I shall never see the purse again." But what was to be done? We stood looking at one another vacantly. We felt nonplussed. Round about us were the sheets and blankets strewn on the floor, leaving the mattress exposed to view. Suddenly, without warning, my father darted forward towards the mattress. I thought he had been overcome with excitement and had fallen; but it turned out that he had noticed, somewhere near the middle of the mattress, a very slight bulge. On pressing it he felt something hard underneath. Then was the mystery concerning the disappearance of the purse effectually solved. We discovered that there was a very small rent or opening in the mattress, through which my father must have, unknowingly, pushed his purse, instead of under the pillow, and the purse must have worked its way during the night towards the middle of the mattress. Had we abandoned the search as hopeless, perhaps twenty or more years after, an old mattress would have been sent to be reticked, and there would have been great joy upon one of the work-people having discovered a purse containing over sixty pounds in bank-notes. Thus would the adage have been fulfilled which tells us, "It is an ill wind that blows no one any good."

An amusing story anent a well-known comedian

who was very popular during the earlier part of the last century, I have often heard my father tell. This actor rejoiced in the curious name of Suett. It appears that Suett had mortally offended a local shopkeeper, as in some play the actor had unmistakably alluded to him in most uncomplimentary terms through the medium of "gagging." This so offended the man of business that he determined to give Suett a lesson which the latter would not be likely to forget. He accordingly ascertained the whereabouts of the stage-door at which Suett was in the habit of entering, and the time at which the actor might be expected to arrive, and determined to lie in wait for him; not, it is true, with the same murderous intentions as those of the lunatic who stabbed poor Terriss at the stage-door of Drury Lane Theatre. But our maligned tradesman was fully prepared to let Suett know what effect a horsewhip well handled was likely to produce. Whereupon, at the proper time, he hid himself behind a wall close to the stage-door, awaiting the arrival of the actor. The night was very dark, added to which it was raining in torrents. Presently Suett appeared upon the scene, looking as wet and miserable as a man without an umbrella would be in such a downpour, the water literally pouring off his cape. His enemy thought he recognized the object of his

vengeance; but wishing to make quite sure that he had got the right man, called out, "Are you Suett?" "No," replied the actor, "I'm dripping." This spontaneous and witty answer came so unexpectedly that, do what he would, the man with the grievance could not restrain his laughter, and he then and there forgot his grudge and shook hands with the actor. From thenceforth the two became the best of friends. *En passant*, I may say that recently, in the review of a book dealing with the history of the Haymarket Theatre, I saw the name of Suett mentioned as one of the leading actors in the earlier history of that theatre.

My father once told me about a curious incident that occurred at one of the orchestral trials of new compositions given by the Society of British Musicians; a society that existed many years ago. One of its members had brought forward an overture of his composition, which proved to be a gross plagiarism on Rossini's well-known Overture to "Tancredi." So closely, indeed, was the introduction of this light work imitated, that when the orchestra arrived at the allegro of the new overture, as if by mutual consent, they one and all struck up the merry tune of the allegro of Rossini's Overture.



Of course, there were roars of laughter from the audience, during which the unfortunate composer beat a hasty retreat.

Whilst my father and myself were at Warwick Street Church, where, as I have already stated, I was as a boy the organist, we made the acquaintance of a Mr. Winter, a member of the congregation, who often came to our house. He was one of those bluff, outspoken men, who not unfrequently emphasize their dicta with an oath of more or less high flavour. He was fond of music, but knew nothing about it or its composers. Thus, perhaps, after my father had asked me to play through to him a concerto that I had been studying, he would turn to my father and say, "That's d——d fine music; did your son compose it?" "No," my father would answer, "that is one of Beethoven's." "Never heard of him," he would reply.

The name of Winter brings to my mind a neat little dialogue between Theodore Hook and his servant, which I once came across:—

Servant: "Please, Mr. Winter has called for the taxes."

Theodore Hook: "Then give Mr. Winter whatever he axes. Mr. Winter's a man who'll stand no kind of flummery; his name may be Winter, his process is *summary*."

I have already alluded to the kindness and attention that the local representatives of the Associated Board show to the examiners when opportunities present themselves. I recollect on one occasion, after we had finished examining, the local representative, who happened to be an American, telling us some very interesting anecdotes. One of these I thought so novel that, although it is quite unconnected with music, I will endeavour to recall it.

It appears, that a friend of this representative who resided in one of the southern states of North America was, a few years ago, disturbed in the middle of the night by a noise as of some one moving about in the room beneath. He assumed at once that a burglar was at work in his drawing-room, so dressing hastily, as well as arming himself with a revolver, he determined to interrupt the thief in the spoliation of his household goods; but when he entered the room he found that the burglar had already decamped with a considerable number of valuables. Knowing the difficulty of

detection in cases where no clue is left, he resolved upon carrying out a unique plan in order to discover the author of the robbery. He went to work on exactly the opposite method to what most people would have done. Instead of raising a hue and cry after the burglar, or giving information to the police, he did everything in his power to keep the matter a secret. Before resuming his night's rest, he carefully rearranged the furniture and articles in the drawing-room, which the burglar had left in confusion, so that no one could have divined that anything unusual had happened. He moreover took care not to say a word to any one about the occurrence, not even to his wife; for he reasoned that, by adopting this course, only two people could possibly be aware that his house had been feloniously entered—one was himself, the other was the burglar. He bided his time. One morning, about a month after this event, a workman whom he occasionally employed came into his office, and, being a talkative fellow, began detailing some of the local gossip, in the course of which he said: "I hear that a burglary was committed in your house some weeks ago." "Yes!" replied the gentleman, "and you're the man who did it." Whereupon the workman was promptly given into custody, and some of the stolen articles being found in his lodgings, proved that this novel

mode of detecting a crime had been entirely successful.

A few of my experiences with pianofortes may not be out of place in this chapter.

When I was studying at Leipsic I purchased a small grand of Irmler's, at Plaidy's recommendation, and before leaving Germany arranged to have it sent to me in London. It was on this piano that for several years after my return to England I was wont to practise. In the end it became so worn with work that I resolved to sell it and get a Broadwood grand. In order to obtain a fair price for my Irmler, I had it nicely done up; so that I succeeded in disposing of it to a furniture dealer very advantageously. Shortly after this I was one day at an upholsterer's shop, when the manager came up to me and said: "If you should be wishing to purchase a piano, we have a very good second-hand grand to show you." After expatiating upon the beautiful qualities of the instrument he was offering, he led me to where it was placed; but what was my surprise to recognize an old friend amid new surroundings. There was my Irmler, on which I so often enjoyed Bach and Beethoven, and upon which I had made my first acquaintance with Chopin and Schumann. I felt almost inclined to repurchase it. Its tone was still sympathetic,

notwithstanding the trying work I had given it in assiduously practising scales, arpeggios, double thirds, and all kinds of technical studies that I used to invent for myself. How the poor instrument had survived such a trying ordeal seemed a miracle. I played something of Schumann on it by way of farewell; and when I left the shop I experienced that feeling which comes to one but too often in one's life—the feeling that another link with the past is broken; for I had indeed parted for ever with an old friend and companion. One is sorry at parting with a favourite dog; but the dog cannot speak like the piano, nor sing like the violin.

It has sometimes happened that when out of town for my summer holidays I have been fortunate in meeting with a fairly good pianoforte in the apartments I have chosen, and which has given me an incentive to writing some new composition for the instrument. At Pwllheli, for example, I wrote my "Autumn Leaves," whilst at Coniston, in the Lake district, I commenced my "Home Scenes"; at both these places there having been a pianoforte where I stayed. Indirectly, the composing of my "Home Scenes" was due to the bad weather we had for several days whilst we were at Coniston. I was with my wife at the time, having married for my second wife a daughter

of the late Joseph Tussaud. We stayed first at a house where there was an upright piano of very antique origin. It was really unplayable, for the unisons were in a most disturbed condition, one note in many instances sounding like two. After we had been a week at this house we went to another close by, at which there was a beautiful cottage piano, nearly new and quite in tune. The presence of the piano, however, would hardly have tempted me to compose had the weather remained fine, for I should have felt little inclined to have given up any of the excursions arranged with my wife in the charming country surrounding Lake Coniston. But as the weather for the first few days after we had settled in our new house was atrocious, rain falling in torrents without cessation, I amused myself at the piano by sketching out the commencement of two or three numbers of my "Home Scenes."

As a rule, be it said, I do not compose whilst I am away on my holidays; but frequently on my return from the country I find my ideas fresher for the rest and change, and therefore take the opportunity of writing some piece before entering again upon my teaching labours.

Each of my pizzicato pieces, "Elf-land" and "Fairyland," were in this way the sequel of summer holidays, and both were introduced at the Crystal

Palace Concerts about six months after I had written them; their companion pieces, "The Ebbing Tide" and "The Flowing Tide," being also included in the respective programmes. I may here incidentally mention that the initial melody of "The Flowing Tide" occurred to me under circumstances the reverse of romantic. I had just entered an omnibus in Piccadilly, when, despite the turmoil, the melody came to me and made itself heard in my imagination above the noise of the traffic, and I dotted it down in my notebook. Perhaps, however, my ideas may have been stimulated by having heard at my publishers, whom I had just left, that Mrs. J. L. Roeckel, of Bristol, had suggested to them my writing another pianoforte piece somewhat in the character of "The Ebbing Tide."

The inducement to compose caused by the presence of a good piano at seaside apartments is, perhaps, of rare occurrence; but even if it is not of much worth, there is something companionable about the instrument being in the room.

I recollect, many years ago, I had a surprise in the way of a piano. This was at Littlehampton. I noticed in our drawing-room there was what appeared to be an old square pianoforte, rather like the one I used to practise on when a boy. It was shut up, several ornaments being upon it. These I took the liberty of removing, in order to

raise the lid and ascertain whether the instrument was worth playing upon.

I struck a full chord with considerable vigour; but not a sound came. What could be the matter? I looked inside, and soon discovered the cause of its being dumb. It had evidently been one of the earliest specimens of a grand ever manufactured, as its compass showed, and probably, being found to be too large to get into the room in which it was placed, and too old to be saleable, a carpenter had been employed to sever it in two, leaving the front part in the room to be utilized as a kind of chiffonier for placing ornaments upon. Such was the sad fate of a pianoforte that, for all one knew, might, from its age, have once belonged to John Cramer.

The mention of this time-honoured name reminds me that, when a boy, I was introduced by my father to the composer of the celebrated studies. This introduction took place in Regent Street, and I can, in imagination, even now see John Cramer before me, an old man of benign appearance, looking as if he had wellnigh finished his labours in the cause of musical art. Well! he still lives in his beautiful studies, and although they not unfrequently recall the feeling of some of the preludes of Bach, there is an individuality about them which will ever secure them an honoured place in the literature of the pianoforte.

CHAPTER XXIX

CELEBRITIES OF THE PAST—MUSICAL "AT HOMES"

AS at the close of the last chapter I incidentally described my meeting with John Cramer, I will take the opportunity of giving an account of similar occasions on which I have been fortunate in coming across men who have made their mark in the history of music.

I recollect, not long after my return from Germany, seeing Meyerbeer bow his acknowledgments from the gallery at the old Hanover Square Rooms, in recognition of the hearty greeting that a Philharmonic audience gave him when he was present at one of the concerts of this society.

Dvořák I made the acquaintance of a good many years ago at an interesting gathering of musicians who had met, at the invitation of Oscar Beringer, to greet the illustrious composer. Dvořák was then a rough, sturdy-looking man, somewhere between forty and fifty years of age. I recollect, too, seeing him when he conducted his

"Spectre Bride" at the Birmingham Festival of 1885, of which I will speak later on.

Tschaikowsky I met two or three times whilst he was in London. The first time in the artists' room at the Philharmonic; again at one of those interesting "at homes" Frederic Cowen so frequently gave in Hamilton Terrace. Tschaikowsky had a striking personality. He was a finely-built man, and held himself so well that he looked quite military in appearance. To see him then, one would scarcely have thought that his days were numbered.

Rubinstein I not only heard at his recitals, but on more than one occasion had the opportunity of holding some conversation with him. The first time I met him was in the artists' room at a Philharmonic concert at the Hanover Square Rooms. I was indulging in a glass of sherry between the parts, and I invited him to take one with me; but he said, "On no account before playing," as he was due for a concerto in the second part.

On another occasion I saw him at the house where he was staying in London. I think Carl Rosa was there too, and both of them were smoking cigarettes. Rubinstein offered me one, which of course I accepted.

A fine head for a painter had Rubinstein. It reminded me of the portraits of Beethoven, al-

though it must have been on a grander scale, for he was a man of large proportions, and evidently of splendid muscular development. I recollect when I was with my friend, the late George Norbury, at a Crystal Palace concert, where Rubinstein was playing one of his concertos, that when he started the pianoforte solo with a *fortissimo* chord at the top of the instrument, darting with lightning speed to the opposite extreme in the bass, followed by a rapid arpeggio up again, my friend turned to me and, in his astonishment, said, "Why, he's an athlete!"

Rubinstein, without doubt, set the example for the athletic style of pianoforte playing, where so many chords are taken from what seems to be a dangerous height. Certainly pianists of this school must be seen as well as heard, in order to fully appreciate their great feats of *bravura*.

Von Bülow, whom I have already mentioned among the pianists I heard at Leipsic, was another musical celebrity that I often came across when in London. The last time I met him was at Stanley Lucas's music-rooms in Bond Street. He was quite a contrast to Rubinstein, being short and of slight build; but what he lacked in stature he made up in energy. As a conductor, I am told, he was unsurpassed; but with the English public he is best remembered as a pianist through the

series of recitals he gave at St. James's Hall, which were the "draw" of the season of 1873. His performance of Schubert's placid Impromptu in G was a notable instance of true expression, and it left a lasting impression upon me. In brilliant passages he was most effective, but he sometimes missed notes. This was probably due to the fact that, instead of looking at the keys, his face was almost always turned towards the audience, so that it was wellnigh impossible for a late-comer to enter the hall while he was at the piano without escaping his observation. At one of his recitals he indicated in a very characteristic manner his disapproval of any one disturbing him whilst playing. It so happened that two ladies were making their way to their seats at the very moment he finished the introduction of the first movement of Beethoven's Sonata Pathetique. This so irritated him that he purposely commenced the allegro at such an absurdly slow pace as to make the quavers in the bass correspond exactly to the time of the ladies' footsteps. As may be imagined, they felt on thorns whilst walking to their places, and hurried on as fast as they possibly could, whilst Von Bülow accelerated his *tempo* in sympathy with their increasing pace. It was only when they had seated themselves that he took the proper speed of the allegro. The musical effect of this extra-

ordinary proceeding was probably somewhat as follows:—

I have already said that I heard the Swedish nightingale, Jenny Lind, sing at many concerts, both in England and Germany. In addition to this, on one occasion I was fortunate enough to have the privilege of spending an evening at her house. This was not long after the performance of my Symphony in A Minor at the Musical Society of London. I received a very courteous letter from her husband, Otto Goldschmidt, expressing a wish to make my acquaintance, and asking me whether I would come to dine at his house and meet my fellow-student, Arthur Sullivan. Needless to say, I accepted the invitation, and

spent a most enjoyable and interesting evening, which I shall always look back upon as being one of the most agreeable episodes in my life.

During the dinner we talked about Leipsic and its musical doings. Sullivan was amusing as usual, and I think I left most of the conversation to him, since I found it could not be in better hands.

Then we went into the drawing-room, and Madame Goldschmidt sang several of her husband's *Lieder*. How beautifully she interpreted them can readily be imagined. When I left, I felt how refreshing it was to find greatness allied to such charming simplicity and amiability.

In regard to Wagner, I was only fortunate in catching a view of him on one or two occasions.

These were during the Wagner Festival at the Albert Hall, which took place in 1887, and which introduced Hans Richter to the British public as a conductor. On one occasion I saw the Bayreuth composer to especial advantage. This was between the parts of one of the concertos, when he was going to the artists' room, arm-in-arm with Dannreuther. Wagner's face wore a very animated expression, for he was evidently excited with the success his music had achieved with an English public—the same public that not long before had looked upon him askance as a ruthless musical revolutionist, bent upon destroying the older school

of music—the music of Mozart, of Haydn, and even perhaps of Beethoven—and of substituting in its place what he styled the music of the future, a form of musical language foreign to its ears and sounding chaotic to the lovers of the old school.

Time has shown that Wagner was not only a great composer, but a great prophet as well, for the music of the future has indeed become the music of to-day, although, if one goes into the history of the Wagnerian school, it is really now the music of the past—not of the remote past, but of the nearer past, if one may so express it. For was it not inaugurated by Berlioz and placed in a more attractive and dramatic light by Wagner more than sixty years ago, although it was not then universally acknowledged? Right was it, therefore, that Wagner should wear an almost triumphant look as I saw him pass near to me, since he beheld in the success of his music at the Albert Hall the dawn of his ultimate popularity in England.

There are still, however, many in this country who shake their heads ominously if you speak to them about Wagner, showing that they are not yet converted to his school of dramatic music. They would gladly hail the performance of such works as "Faust," "Rigoletto," and "The Huguenots." Perhaps the greatest proof of Wagner's

triumph is to be found in the remarkable influence he has exercised upon the style of modern composers. Imitation is said to be the sincerest flattery; and in this case, surely no composer since Mendelssohn has ever been the recipient of so much homage—indeed, scarcely a new composition for orchestra is brought before the public but unmistakable traces of the Wagnerian influence are present.

Not only has orchestral music been influenced by his style, but, to a great extent, pianoforte music as well. This is all the more remarkable, as Wagner wrote nothing of importance for the instrument of our homes. It was, perhaps, in a great manner due to Liszt that the Wagnerian methods were brought to bear fruit in regard to pianoforte music. For the wonderful flights of *bravura* which the Abbé infused into his pianoforte compositions, made it possible, in a way, to imitate, or find an equivalent in that instrument for, the extra brilliancy of instrumentation which Wagner introduced into his orchestral scores.

Liszt, moreover, had characteristics of his own. He was also a musical revolutionist. Many say he went too far—that in endeavouring to produce new and weird effects of harmony he disregarded the first principles of art, which should, before all things, have beauty for its model; that

he let his music run riot, and so forth. It is not for me to pose as an arbitrator on such a momentous question, but it is certain that he too, like Wagner, has exercised a remarkable influence upon the style of modern pianoforte music. Undoubtedly he is heard to the best advantage in compositions for that instrument, on which he was, according to all accounts, the most marvellous exponent that the world has ever produced. Unfortunately, he never performed in public whilst I was in Leipsic, so that it was not until 8 April, 1886, that I had an opportunity of hearing him. This was on the occasion of the reception given in his honour by Walter Bache on that date. Then, of course, he was very old, so old-looking, with his white hair reaching wellnigh to his shoulders, that it seemed almost uncanny to hear him perform feats of *virtuosité* that would have been wonderful in a vigorous young pianist. He played twice that evening. One of his performances, if I remember rightly, was the improvising on a theme of Schubert.

It was a most interesting occasion, this *hommage à Liszt;* and certainly the late Walter Bache, my former fellow-student at Leipsic, deserved the thanks of all present for the opportunity afforded of hearing the far-famed Abbé, whose name will be handed down to posterity as the king of pianists.

But for this occasion, the majority of those assembled, myself included, would never have heard him. I saw him again, however, at the splendid reception given in his honour at Mr. H. Littleton's palatial house at Norwood. Liszt did not play, and many of those present were disappointed, as all nursed a lingering hope that he might be prevailed upon to give them yet another opportunity of hearing him before he quitted our shores for ever.

Sir Arthur Sullivan was at the reception, and after its conclusion he drove me to town in his brougham. I was glad to find myself again in Sullivan's company, and I think, whilst we chatted together, we each felt the same enjoyment in one another's society that we used to experience when we were fellow-students at Leipsic. He showed me the cigarette-case that the Duke of Edinburgh had given to him, and, of course, pressed me to smoke a cigarette.

One of the greatest champions in the cause of the music of both Liszt and Wagner was the late Dr. Francis Hueffer, who succeeded Mr. J. W. Davison as musical critic of "The Times." Davison had unmistakably been opposed to the Wagnerian theories, but Hueffer not only believed in them, but actively propagated them through the medium of the powerful journal in whose

columns he represented the cause of music. He also became editor of a new weekly musical journal started by the firm of Novello & Co., and called "Concordia." This gave him increased opportunities of furthering the cause of the music of the future.

Dr. Hueffer, it may be interesting to state, was married to a daughter of the late Madox Brown, the celebrated painter. It so happened that Miss Brown had been a school companion of my sister Emma, so that the early friendship formed between the two girls, in after years led indirectly to my becoming very intimate with Dr. Hueffer.

Like many of us, he was not entirely free from some popular superstitions. He told me that on one occasion, contrary to his custom, he walked quite bravely under a ladder, which, as every one knows, is considered to be very unlucky. He felt quite complacent at his courage, and was prepared to boast of this feat to his wife, when, on returning home, he found that a fire which had broken out in his study had done a considerable amount of damage. He resolved never to incur the risk again.

My memory recalls a very interesting reception that Dr. Hueffer gave at his house in Brook Green in honour of Saint-Saëns, the great French composer. I was delighted to have had an oppor-

tunity of speaking with the most prominent representative of the French school of classical music. During the evening I played my Romance in A flat, which I originally wrote as a supplement for "Concordia," and I was very gratified at what he said, both in regard to the little composition and to my playing. He was most charming in society, and also highly appreciative.

The receptions of the late Madame Lemmens-Sherrington, the accomplished soprano singer, at her house in Finchley Road, were often both interesting and enjoyable, and I heard there to great advantage many of the popular artists of the day. At one of these entertainments a contralto singer brought with her some MS. Swedish songs, but as the copy was written for soprano, and consequently too high for her, she inquired whether any pianist present would volunteer to transpose these songs a fourth lower. This being a rather big order in the way of transposition at sight, no one seemed inclined to respond to the invitation, although several well-known and able musicians were appealed to. Madame Sherrington then asked me whether I would undertake the task! I looked at the songs, and seeing a way, through imaginary clefs and keys, I eventually consented. When my task had been accomplished, I was complimented on the manner in which I had manœuvred the transposition with such success.

En passant, I will say a few words about an "at home" I gave not many years ago at my house at 8 Marlborough Place, St. John's Wood. I had invited one of my pupils, Miss Gwendoline Toms, who was then studying under me at the Royal College of Music, and who was an excellent pianist. Having asked her if she would bring two of her fellow-students with her, she accordingly introduced a singer and a violinist. Both Miss Toms and the violinist, Miss Chew, had played with great effect, when I asked the other young lady to sing.

She had not sung many bars before we became aware that we were listening to a contralto voice of remarkable beauty and richness of tone. When she had finished we said to one another, "What a grand voice this girl possesses; surely a great future is in store for her!" And we were right, for the Royal College student that had so enthralled us was no other than Clara Butt, then unknown to fame.

The late Mrs. Henry Wylde was wont to give many a brilliant reception in connexion with the London Academy of Music. Some of them took place at the Portman Rooms. On one of these occasions, several years ago, she introduced me to Miss Mary Tussaud, whom I married, as I have already mentioned, in the year 1891. On the

evening of our first meeting, at the reception just alluded to, I found that she was in the company of a lady and a gentleman who had escorted her to this festive gathering. Somehow or other, upon being introduced, I had not caught their names. Inquiring of Miss Tussaud, I learnt that they were Mr. Max Pemberton and his wife, one of Miss Tussaud's sisters. It was not surprising that the name of Max Pemberton was then unknown to me, as at that time he had not given to the world those stirring works of fiction which have made his name a household word amongst us.

Whilst on the subject of receptions, I ought not to omit mentioning the very enjoyable entertainments that the late Mrs. Roche used to give, many years ago, at Cadogan Gardens, at not a few of which I was present. Mrs. Roche was a daughter of Moscheles, and her daughter Nina, as I have already said, studied piano in my class, when at the National Training School of Music.

At Mrs. Roche's receptions there were often quite a large number of representative musicians, with many celebrities from the art world, no doubt friends of her brother, Felix Moscheles, the distinguished artist.

Apart from music, the principal attractions at these evenings were the dramatic performances got up by Mrs. Roche's family, in which the late

Charles Dickens, son of the famous novelist, frequently took part. Not only did Mrs. Roche's daughters paint all the scenery, which was very effective, but many of the pieces performed were written by them, and very cleverly written too.

I recollect, in one of the French plays in which they acted, the scene represents a narrow street in some old French town. At one of the windows in this street, in an upper story, a young girl is seen watering a plant, and whilst she is so engaged she accidentally knocks over both the plant and the flower-pot. They fall upon the head of a young gentleman passing beneath, crushing his silk hat out of recognition. This, of course, leads to an amusing scene between him and the girl.

The gentleman is at first indignant with the author of his misfortune, and, to add to his discomfiture, the young lady is unable to refrain from laughing at the sorry figure he presents with his battered hat; but, as may be expected, the consequence of the accident is a match between the two.

Another piece performed at one of these evenings took the form of a charade. This particular evening had been given specially in honour of a celebrated singer and composer from the Fatherland, who had then not been long in England, and the charade had been written by one of the Misses

Roche. The first syllable of the proposed word was easily guessed, as meaning "hen." The next also was not a difficult problem to solve, and it was soon discovered that "shell" was the solution to it. It was at once perceived that the answer to the charade was present in the room to represent bodily the entire word; which, as may be surmised, was—"Henschell."

Every one was greatly amused by the charade, Henschell himself as much as any one in the room.

One evening Charles Dickens, son of the famous novelist of that name, gave a fine recitation of his father's "Boots at the Swan," which the audience enjoyed immensely. The father's style of recitation seemed to have found its reflex in the son's method, and we felt that, next to hearing the original, we did not fare badly in listening to so charming a rendering of the humorous sketch. Mr. Henry Dickens, the distinguished advocate and K.C., and brother to the above, was frequently present on these occasions with his wife, a daughter of Mrs. Roche. A conspicuous figure at these receptions was Mrs. Roche's mother, Madame Moscheles, widow of the celebrated composer and pianist. She was quite a handsome old lady, with an almost youthful contour of feature, and hair so white and venerable that in its profusion it might have rivalled even that of Liszt.

It was a face that such an artist as Rembrandt would have delighted in.

I had many an interesting conversation with Madame Moscheles about music and musicians connected with the time in which her distinguished husband flourished.

CHAPTER XXX

THE TOY SYMPHONY: LEIPSIC AND LONDON—"THE BUILDING OF THE SHIP"

LOOKING back upon my student days at Leipsic, I recollect that at the end of the summer quarter the earnestness of study was relieved by some festivities, or entertainments, in which the pupils of the Conservatorium took part. At one of these we performed the Toy Symphony of Romberg. Amongst those who took part in it were Arthur Sullivan, who conducted, Carl Rosa, and Franklin Taylor. I was also among the performers, and I believe I played the rattle. Whilst conducting, Sullivan assumed a mock seriousness that was very droll, and altogether our playing caused much amusement amongst the professors, students, and others who were present.

History is ever repeating itself, and so, many years afterwards, a performance of the same Toy Symphony took place at St. James's Hall on 14 May, 1880, in which Sullivan and myself again took part. On this interesting occasion every toy instrument was played by some well-known

REHEARSAL OF ROMBERG'S TOY SYMPHONY, 1880

Arthur Chappell. W. Kuhe. A. Randegger. Sir August Manns
Sir John Stainer. C. Engel. Carl Rosa. W. Ganz.
J. F. Barnett.

Dr. F. H. Cowen. Charles Santley. Countess Folkestone.
Sir Joseph Barnby. Sir William Cusins. Sir Julius Benedict. Daubert. J. Blumenthal.
Sir Arthur Sullivan. Henry Leslie.

musician of the day. The concert at which this symphony was performed was got up by the Countess Folkestone for a charity, and the details were carried out by Henry Leslie, who conducted.

It was very funny to hear Sullivan play the cuckoo with just the same air of importance that he would have worn if he had been handling a legitimate instrument. Then there was Randegger hitting hard at a toy drum; Benedict was engaged with the bells; Hallé played the quail; Barnby, the nightingale; Blumenthal, the rattle; Stainer and Kuhe, the toy trumpets; whilst Frederick Cowen and myself rendered the symphony as a duet for the piano, in order to strengthen the few real orchestral instruments that represented the strings. These were performed by the following well-known musicians: 1st violins, W. G. Cusins and August Manns; 2nd violins, Carl Rosa and Charles Santley; viola, W. Ganz; and 'cello, Daubert.

The public were delighted at seeing so many celebrities in the musical world playing upon grotesque toy instruments; but to those who took part in it the rehearsal was even more amusing, as we all enjoyed the affair as a huge musical joke.

. . . . . .

To return to more serious events, I will say something about the composing of my cantata,

"The Building of the Ship." This, in the order of production, was the fifth of my works for chorus and orchestra, and it was written for the Leeds Festival of 1880, and produced on 13 October of that year.

The idea of writing a cantata on Longfellow's well-known poem was the result of looking over a book of the poetical works of the great American bard.

I think I was at first attracted by "Evangeline" as being a suitable subject, but I found the lengthy metre of the poem likely to be a stumbling-block, musically speaking. After glancing at some of the other poems, I came across "The Building of the Ship," and at once saw that it presented many good opportunities to the composer. It also opened a new field of ideas for musical illustration. In my "Ancient Mariner" and "Paradise and the Peri" the subjects of the poems had more or less to do with the supernatural or purely imaginative; but in "The Building of the Ship" the poet treated a theme of everyday life. Around such ordinary and prosaic details as are to be found in a ship-building yard he had ingeniously evolved a halo of romance by introducing the episode in which the master promised the hand of his daughter to his apprentice when the building of the ship should have been accomplished. Although the love epi-

sode is one of the most attractive features in the poem, much interest attaches to the graphic description of the construction of the vessel and the toil of the workers engaged upon it, and to this I was anxious to do full justice. Fortunately, an opportunity presented itself which enabled me to study to the best advantage the local colour required.

It happened that in the year 1878 a performance of my "Ancient Mariner" had been arranged at a concert given in Portsmouth for the benefit of the widows and orphans of those who had perished in the ill-fated "Eurydice," which capsized off the Isle of Wight in the March previous. The concert was got up by Mr. MacChean, of Southsea, an amateur singer with a charming tenor voice. He invited me to stay at his house not only on the night of the performance, but for several days following it. Moreover, he proposed the very thing I had been wishing for—that we should go and inspect the Portsmouth dockyards. Whilst witnessing the construction of a great battleship, I endeavoured to imbue myself with the wondrous feeling that fills an eye-witness of the busy scene so finely described by Longfellow in the lines:—

> And soon throughout the shipyard's bounds
> Were heard the intermingled sounds
> Of axes and of mallets plied
> With vigorous arms on every side.

During the few days I was at Portsmouth I saw as much of the famous dockyards as it was possible to see in so limited a time.

Had I been a prince from foreign lands, I could not have received more attention and kindness from the officials. I was first invited to hear a lecture on torpedoes and mines, which left me in a murderous frame of mind, with sufficient knowledge, as I thought, to have blown up our enemies' finest battleships, had occasion presented.

I was asked to spend a morning on one of the great transports, and was shown over it by the captain, who explained its wonderful arrangements. Captain Thunder was his name—a name sufficient in itself to strike one with awe. His appearance and manner, however, belied his name, for never had I met a more amiable and kind-hearted man. At luncheon he proved himself to be an excellent host, although at a sea-fight I had no doubt he could prove a host in himself. I was likewise present on one of the warships whilst the gunners were practising with the gatling, and was surprised at the wonderful range to which these weapons can carry havoc and destruction.

Then below decks I saw the bluejackets moving one of the big guns from one port-hole to another on the opposite side of the vessel. In the gloom of the nether deck they appeared rather

like weird gnomes than men. At the word of command they rushed at the gun as a pack of hounds seizes its quarry. It might have been a child's toy-gun, so easily did they handle it. I must confess, however, to a certain amount of nervousness on the ground of what my organs of hearing might suffer should they have fired the gun. It is well known that a sudden shock to the tympanum is not unattended with danger to the delicate tissues of which this organ is composed.

When I was at Leipsic, Hauptmann told me that the popular song-writer Abt on one occasion was standing very close to a steam-engine when he was quite deafened by the shrill noise of the whistle. Fortunately, he recovered his hearing, but it left a curious after-effect: he found that the power he had in recognizing the actual pitch of notes was curtailed, so that all the upper notes beyond the treble C above the staff were undistinguishable by him. I therefore felt relieved that the gun was not given an opportunity of showing off its stentorian powers, especially as I had no cotton-wool at hand.

Rowing back from the warships to the shore, I saw something quite new to me. It was a fish torpedo skimming along the surface of the sea, like some marvellous flying fish. It passed really within a very short distance of our boat—I thought almost too near to be safe.

When I returned home from my visit to Portsmouth, I felt aglow with the novel sensations caused by my exciting experiences at Portsmouth, and I lost no time in setting to work to give musical colour to those words of Longfellow in which he describes the building of the ship.

The line, "With axes and with mallets," especially interested me; and I sought in the instrumentation to give it as realistic an interpretation as was practicable. This I have contrived by short notes in unison for the wind, alternating with the kettledrum. Eugene D'Albert, who heard the cantata at the London rehearsal, particularly congratulated me upon this orchestral effect as being very descriptive.

When I had completed the music for the first half of the poem, and was becoming more than ever entranced with the beauty of Longfellow's verses, I could not refrain from writing to the author, to tell him of the work I was engaged upon. He wrote me in reply a very courteous letter, which I have carefully preserved. I give below some extracts from it:—

BANDRIDGE, *26 Dec., 1879.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I am glad to hear by your letter that you find in "The Building of the Ship" a theme for a cantata. It is a compliment which I appreciate,

and I look forward to its completion with great interest. . . .

With many thanks for your good intention, and all good wishes for Xmas and the New Year,

I am, my dear Sir,
Yours very truly,
HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

The poem, I found as I went on with my work, presented great variety for musical treatment. This, to me, was a source of much satisfaction, for opportunities continually unfolded themselves, tempting me to exert myself to the utmost to do them justice. There were not only occasions for descriptive, but also for dramatic music. Of the latter, I may instance the wonder and joy to which the people gave vent when they saw the ship being launched, and which the poet has set forth in these beautiful lines :—

Take her, O bridegroom old and grey,
Take her to thy protecting arms,
With all her youth and all her charms.

Then how inspiring are the impressive words uttered by the pastor who performed the marriage service on board the newly launched vessel :—

Like unto ships far off at sea,
Outward or homeward bound are we.

At the Leeds Festival I was delighted to find how well the cantata was received by the audience. The grandeur of tone the choir imparted to the chorus, "Thus with the rising of the sun," called forth an irresistible encore.

Two other numbers also were redemanded; these were the tenor air, "Ah! how skilful grows the hand," and the bass solo and chorus, "The prayer is said." The solos were taken by Miss Anna Williams, Madame Patey, Edward Lloyd, and Henschell.

After the performance of my work, which occupied the first part of the concert, I received the congratulations of the president of the festival, the Duke of Edinburgh, to whom I had dedicated the cantata.

At the Worcester Festival of 1881 my "Building of the Ship," which had gone the round of the choral societies, was performed. I conducted on the occasion, and the work met with a very warm reception. At its conclusion I went to the chapter-house of the cathedral, which was used as the artists' room. There, among the other artists, I saw Joseph Maas, one of the most gifted tenors of the last century.

In the autumn of the same year in which this performance of my cantata took place, I had promised an orchestral work for the Norwich

Festival. This was my suite, "The Harvest Festival," and I dedicated it to Lady Brassey.

The day on which it was performed happened to be one of the stormiest on record; in fact, a hurricane was raging which uprooted trees and did much damage all over the country.

During the interval in the morning I went to the artists' room to look over my work, which was to be produced in the evening, and which needed a few corrections. This room was a kind of adjunct to the hall, built out from it, and with a skylight for roof and ceiling. The storm was raging with increased fury, and I was not unprepared for the terrific crash of a fallen chimney, which seemed as if it had crushed in the ceiling of the room we were in. Pieces of brick and slate came flying about us. The artists' room had a very narrow escape. If the chimney-stack had been blown over in an opposite direction, it must inevitably have fallen through the skylight upon those of us assembled below. No wonder we congratulated one another upon our escape!

Several years after the Norwich Festival at which my "suite" was produced, I added a new movement to it, besides making many important alterations in the instrumentation. In this form it was given at the Philharmonic Society of London on 31 May, 1888, under the title of the

"Pastoral Suite." I may incidentally mention that not many years ago I conducted an excellent performance of it at Leeds; the concert at which it was given was one of a series inaugurated by that indefatigable and accomplished musician, Mr. Edgar Haddock, who has done so much good to the cause of music in Yorkshire.

CHAPTER XXXI

"THE WISHING BELL"

JUST twelve years after the production of my "Harvest Festival" I was again down for another work for the Norwich Festival; this was my cantata for female voices, "The Wishing Bell," to which I have already alluded in an earlier chapter.

As I had originally written this cantata with a view to its performance on a large scale, its introduction at the festival was only in accordance with the general character and scope of the work.

There are many who regard the cantata for female voices as a form of art of a less elevated class of work than that written for a full choir of mixed voices. This idea is the outcome of the fact that so many short works of an ephemeral character have been written for female voices, suitable for performances at ladies' schools. Such cantatas are usually very simple indeed, and the subjects chosen are generally about flowers or fairies.

When Miss Jetta Vogel sent me the libretto for

the cantata, I saw at once that the subject of "The Wishing Bell" presented some fine opportunities for a composer. It was altogether on a broader scale than any libretto I have had sent me on approval for this class of cantata.

The story of the poem is founded upon an old custom still in existence amongst the simple people who inhabit the neighbourhood of the Lake of Veldes, Carniola, South Austria. There is a small island in this picturesque lake, upon which centuries ago the convent church of St. Mary of the Lake was built, and in the tower of which hangs the Wishing Bell. The belief was, and still holds good in this locality, that the ringing of this bell, as an accompaniment to their prayers, secures the fulfilment of their wishes. When, therefore, the bell is heard from the shores of the lake, it is known that some one in distress is praying to Heaven for help.

It is supposed in the libretto of the cantata, the story of which relates to mediæval times, that a raid is being made upon the inhabitants of Veldes by some hostile bands. The leader of the force that is defending the homes of the peasantry sends his mother and his bride to the little island upon which the church stands to ring the Wishing Bell and pray for victory, as a battle is imminent. Returning, the two women are met by a crowd of

others who have been watching the fight from the hills, and from them they learn that their loved ones have vanquished the foe and gained a complete victory.

The "Wishing Bell" was produced at the Norwich Festival on 9 October, 1893; but as the occurrences of that time belong more to the present than the past, it is hardly necessary to enter into any description of the excellent performance I was privileged to conduct of my cantata. I may say, however, that, with one exception, it had the advantage of all the resources of the great festival, which have been brought to such a pitch of excellence by its indefatigable conductor, Alberto Randegger.

The exception alluded to was the absence of the male voices of the choir, and for which no one was to blame but myself, as I had elected to write a work in which the sterner sex was not allowed a part. Should I ever be permitted, at some future date, to write another choral work for this festival, I shall take care to make amends to the gentlemen of the choir for having left them out in the cold on the former occasion.

CHAPTER XXXII

MUSIC OF THE PAST: A RÉSUMÉ

WE all know how unreliable a faculty is memory. I must therefore be pardoned if, in the course of these reminiscences, I have omitted to mention several musical events of special interest that came under my personal notice. I will, however, endeavour to make amends.

To go back a long way: I was present on the occasion of the first performance in England of Arthur Sullivan's "Tempest" music at the Crystal Palace, on 5 April, 1862. In imagination, I again see Sullivan, who had been sitting in the body of the concert-room, leave his seat at the close of the performance, and hurry on to the platform to acknowledge the hearty recall with which the audience greeted him, his face beaming with the excitement of a first triumph.

Then, I heard Schubert's great Symphony in C at a concert of the Musical Society, when it was introduced for the first time to a London audience.

With Alfred Mellon as conductor, the work was finely played; nevertheless, it fell flat and evoked

but little applause. The cool reception awarded to the symphony was, undoubtedly, due to the *tempi* being far too slow—much slower than I had been accustomed to in the performances of the work at Leipsic under Rietz.

The reappearance of Madame Norman-Neruda (Lady Charles Hallé) at the concert of the Philharmonic Society, at which I was present, and which took place on 22 May, 1871, was an event of great interest. Her overwhelming success proved to be the death-blow to the prejudice which had previously existed against ladies playing the violin, and her example led to its being added to the number of instruments available for the gentle sex.

It may be here stated that her début at the Philharmonic Society took place so far back as 1849, when she appeared as the child violinist, Mlle. Wilhelmine Neruda.

The performances given by two Italian virtuosi at the Philharmonic Society, somewhere during the sixties and seventies, seem even now quite fresh in my memory. One of these artists was Piatti, whom I had frequently heard before at Leipsic, where I had learnt to appreciate his marvellously clear execution and sympathetic tone. In later years I often used to see him at his house in St. John's Wood. He was a small, spare man, so that

his perfect command over the violoncello was all the more surprising. The other executant alluded to was Bottesini, quite a contrast to Piatti, as he was both tall and athletic, and well suited to the large instrument he played upon. I heard him to great advantage at the Philharmonic Concert on 8 May, 1871, when he performed a concerto of his own. Apart from the beauty of tone he produced from the double bass, he had quite a series of gymnastic feats to go through whilst executing *bravura* passages. Indeed, one had to see as well as to hear him, in order to appreciate to the fullest extent the difficulties he was overcoming.

The Novello Oratorio Concerts, begun in the year 1885, gave me an opportunity of hearing several works of great importance. Among these may be instanced Mackenzie's oratorio, "The Rose of Sharon"—so poetical in conception—which was given on 20 March, 1885. Then on 6 April, 1886, I heard Liszt's "Saint Elizabeth." At this performance the aged composer himself was present. On 1 December, 1887, I had an opportunity of hearing Frederic Cowen's "Ruth," with its charming and ideal pastoral music; and again on 15 December, 1887, there was a fine rendering of Stanford's Irish Symphony, in which the Hibernian element in music is placed amid such attractive musical surroundings.

At the latter concert I conducted a performance of my "Ancient Mariner," in which the chorus excelled itself in beauty of tone and vigour of attack; whilst the solo numbers were fortunate in having the interpretation of such artists as Anna Williams, Madame Patey, Edward Lloyd, and Santley.

I attended one of the earliest performances of Goetz's Symphony[1] given in England, at the Crystal Palace Concerts, under Manns. This charming work one rarely hears now. Another symphony performed at one of these concerts, which greatly interested me, was that by E. Silas, who has so long made England his home that we look upon him as one of our countrymen. Frederick Cliffe's Symphony in C minor I heard at the Crystal Palace on 20 April, 1889. This fresh and vigorous work placed its author among the foremost rank of native composers. Hamish McCunn's overture, "Land of the Mountain and the Flood," I heard at one of the same concerts on 5 November, 1887, and was greatly impressed by its fine orchestral colouring.

Some recollections of Gounod, Dvořák, and Grieg crop up in my memory in connexion with their doings at Birmingham Festivals.

[1] First performed in England at Madame Viard Louis' concert on 17 December, 1878, conducted by Weist Hill.

I was present at a most interesting rehearsal in 1882. This was the London rehearsal for the festival of that year. Gounod was in fine form whilst conducting his "Redemption." How proud he looked as he surveyed the splendid orchestra he was about to direct! And well he might, knowing that his work was about to be introduced at one of those grand musical gatherings that had introduced Mendelssohn's masterpiece to the world. Then had he not scored a greater financial success in regard to an oratorio than any composer before, and probably than any one since?—inasmuch as he was to be the happy recipient of no less a sum than £3000 for the first performance of his work. At this rehearsal the "March to Calvary" made a deep impression upon every one present. All, too, were more or less excited by the fact of hearing the new oratorio conducted by the composer of "Faust." I heard it in its complete form at the Festival itself, and was greatly struck with the wonderfully weird effects Gounod has produced by the use of chromatic intervals.

At the following festival, in 1885, I heard his "Mors et Vita." Gounod did not conduct his work, but left it to the care of Hans Richter, who secured for it a fine performance.

Dvořák's first appearance at the Festival was quite an event in the musical world. As he

ascended the platform, great interest was felt by all present at seeing before them a musician who, by his genius, not only had risen from an obscure origin to a high position in society, but who had likewise created for himself an undying name as a composer.

The first performance of Dvořák's "Spectre's Bride" at this Festival left a deep and lasting impression upon me. Near the end of the cantata, when Albani was singing with great dramatic power, and the orchestra was giving forth incantation-like effects with mysterious bells clanging the while, a feeling akin to "creepy" was produced as the horrors depicted in the libretto were in progress, musically coloured in such a realistic manner.

It was a wonderful specimen of conducting to which Grieg treated us when he directed the performance of his "Holberg Suite," arranged for strings, and given at the Festival of 1888. One could never have divined that such novel effects could have been produced out of these instruments unaided by the wind. At this same festival I heard Hubert Parry's oratorio, "Judith," in the choral writing of which the ingenious contrapuntal devices employed by the composer are made the vehicle of the highest form of musical expression, combining nobility of thought with religious en-

thusiasm. Another opportunity of hearing this fine work presented itself at the Novello Oratorio Concerts in December, 1888.

In the region of national opera I have had some opportunities of noting its progress in this country.

As the first performance of my uncle's "Mountain Sylph" took place before I was born, it cannot be said that I neglected an opportunity of hearing it on that auspicious occasion. And, in later times, I do not seem to have heard it when it was revived at Drury Lane in 1854. But I remember being present, many years ago, at a musical reception given by the late Charles Salaman, at his residence, when the music from the opera was sung very effectively, the work being greatly admired.[1]

At Covent Garden, in 1864, I heard George Macfarren's "Helvellyn," which ran close on the lines of success. Goring Thomas's "Nadeschda," which achieved much popularity, pleased me greatly, so that I now wonder how it is this work has dropped out of the répertoire of English opera. It was performed for the first time at

[1] Since writing these few words about the "Mountain Sylph," I have, at last, had an opportunity of hearing it, as I was present at a most excellent performance of it given in July, 1906, by the students of the Guildhall School of Music, conducted by Richard Walthew.

Drury Lane on 16 April, 1885, by the operatic company established and conducted by Carl Rosa, who devoted his best energies to the cause of national opera. He gave us the opportunity of hearing with English text foreign operas, rendered by such accomplished artists as Parepa, Santley, Charles Lyall, etc., which in the provinces were conducted by Mr. G. H. Betjemann.

Stanford's "Canterbury Pilgrims," which I heard at Covent Garden in 1884, struck me as being a work of great power, both dramatically and musically. One chorus in it, where several conflicting elements make themselves heard, was graphic and exciting, and was on a par both as regards ingenuity and effect with the wonderful choral ejaculations of the crowd in "Lohengrin," when Lohengrin himself appears upon the scene, navigated in so novel a manner that the astonishment of the onlookers is certainly not without cause. I am glad, too, that I witnessed one of the performances of F. H. Cowen's romantic and effective "Thorgrim," which took place at Drury Lane on 5 April, 1890. In this opera the composer has treated with highly dramatic effect the poetical libretto of Joseph Bennett.

Another opera written on modern lines was A. C. Mackenzie's "Colombo," the libretto being from the pen of Dr. F. Hueffer. I was present

at one of the performances of this opera, which took place at Covent Garden in 1883, and at once recognized the able manner in which the composer had availed himself of the opportunities the libretto furnished for writing music of great dramatic power. The Wagnerian theories, in a modified form, are here carried out with consummate skill, enhanced by all the resources of modern orchestration.

I will conclude these allusions to English opera with some mention of Sullivan's work in that field.

There are many among his admirers who regret that this versatile composer did not, during his best years, give his ambition a higher flight than the region of comic opera, or, more strictly speaking, opera-bouffe. That the unique specimens of this popular form of light opera, which Sullivan threw off with such an easy hand, and which gave enjoyment to thousands of persons both here and abroad, constitute in the aggregate an achievement of no small value, goes without saying. For our composer, aided by his ever-ready collaborator, W. S. Gilbert, whilst affording unbounded amusement, managed to do so without ever overstepping the bounds of propriety or descending into the commonplace in music. Nevertheless, Sullivan aspired to still higher things, and therefore he

gave us "Ivanhoe." Unfortunately, for the purpose of producing this work a great speculation was entered into by the building and running of a new opera-house, so that the failure of the scheme as a whole damaged the success of "Ivanhoe" itself. This success was really of great magnitude, taking into account the number of times it was performed. I was present at one of the representations, and was much impressed with the grasp the composer evinced in treating his subject, and the facile manner in which he gave appropriate musical colouring to the various dramatic situations evolved during the progress of the story.

There are several other interesting musical events that I could recount had I sufficient space at my disposal. Many of these incidents, however, do not come within the scope of these reminiscences, as the dates of their occurrence are comparatively recent. It would therefore be unnecessary for me to speak of the works of such composers as Sir Edward Elgar, Walford Davies, Edward German, Arthur Somervell, Coleridge Taylor, Charles Wood, and many others, whose achievements in the field of music are fresh in the memory of the public.

Before closing this chapter, it may not be out of place to make some allusion to two occasions

on which I appeared before the public in different musical capacities from those I had been accustomed to. At the Crystal Palace Concert on 27 October, 1888, I ventured to essay an organ solo, and introduced for the first time my Offertoire for Organ in G. This piece met with so favourable a reception that I was encouraged to commence another work for the organ, my Fantasia in F, which, however, I did not complete until a year or two ago.

An event to which I shall always look back with pride was my appearing as conductor at the Philharmonic concert on 23 April, 1884.

Mr. (afterwards Sir William) Cusins, having resigned his post as *chef d'orchestre* of the Philharmonic Society, the directors decided, for the season of 1884, upon appointing a different conductor for each concert, and I was fortunate in being one of the musicians selected for that post. At the concert that I conducted, Madame Essipoff played Beethoven's E flat Pianoforte Concerto. She used so much *tempo rubato* in her performance of the work, that it was not an easy task to keep the orchestra in accord with her varying time changes; but knowing the concerto as I did by heart, I was able to secure a perfect *tout ensemble*, and Madame Essipoff afterwards thanked me for the manner in which she had been supported in

the orchestral accompaniments. It was a great source of enjoyment to me, likewise, to conduct the symphony at this concert, which happened to be that fresh and spontaneous work, Beethoven's second masterpiece in this form of classic art.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE SKETCH SYMPHONY (SCHUBERT'S)

IN previous chapters I have more than once mentioned Sir George Grove; but I knew him during the greater part of his career as Mr. Grove. As a matter of fact, before his knighthood he took a more active part in the musical world than he did after it. Nevertheless, as Director of the Royal College of Music, he did not lose his interest in the Crystal Palace Concerts, to the success of which he had so greatly contributed. For whenever I went to one of these performances there I saw Sir George, sitting in his usual seat at the back of the press gallery, his face beaming with delight at some exquisite point in a Beethoven symphony that was in progress. For many years prior to his knighthood, in fact from the time I returned from Germany, I had made it my custom to attend the Saturday concerts at the Palace, and seldom, if ever, did I see his seat unoccupied by its owner. Often I would sit down beside him, and thus a friendship grew up between us. Nevertheless, I had not then the privilege of

visiting at his house, though this I often wished for. But eventually my desires were realized, by the agency of Schubert, or rather by a work of this immortal composer. The work in question should rightly be called a sketch, for it was the sketch symphony in E that Schubert had left in a still more incomplete form than that colossal fragment known as the unfinished symphony in B Minor.

One Saturday afternoon about the year 1880, after attending one of these concerts, I was walking with Mr. Grove towards his residence in Sydenham. He was talking about music as usual, when in the course of conversation he asked: "Did you ever see the wonderful sketch of Schubert that I have at home? I must show it to you one day. It is quite unique; there is nothing of the kind extant. It is the sketch of a symphony in E which Schubert never completed. Yet in one way it is perfect, for every movement is sketched out on scoring paper and not a bar is omitted from beginning to end."

Then he went on to tell me that, with the exception of the introduction and a small portion of the allegro, which is fully scored, only the subjects are indicated, generally without bass or harmonies. He also gave me some interesting information in regard to the history of the sketch, from which I

learnt that it was given by Ferdinand Schubert to Felix Mendelssohn, and it is said that the latter intended to complete it, an intention which, unfortunately, his premature death prevented him from carrying out. It then came into the possession of his brother, Paul Mendelssohn, who, some years later, gave it to George Grove.

Whilst listening to these details, an idea, that seemed wellnigh presumptuous, came to me: Could I, perhaps, try to complete the instrumentation of the sketch? I had not the courage then to confide my inmost wishes to Grove, but when I left him I carried with me a secret ambition to put this sketch into such shape that it might be available for performance.

A week or two after this I ventured to disclose to Grove what I had in my mind. He was most interested, and asked me to go home with him in order to see the sketch. This was my first visit to the quaint old house at Lower Norwood. But I do not think that I then paid much attention to its pretty surroundings, for I was so eager to see this wonderful Schubert MS.

Grove lost no time in satisfying my curiosity, and I was soon turning over the pages that Schubert's hand had traced sixty years before. I sat down to the piano and endeavoured to fill in some of the harmonies at points where only the

melody was given, but found, to my disappointment, that I could make very little of the sketch. I therefore asked permission to take it with me, promising to guard it as a treasure of great worth.

When I arrived home I made a somewhat serious attempt to unravel the mystery of the harmonies Schubert might have had in his mind when sketching out his symphony, and set to work at the first movement, where the second subject commences, the theme of which is for the clarinet, but without any clue as to what other instruments the composer might have intended to be used. I soon found that my self-imposed task was infinitely greater than I had anticipated. Still, I determined not to give it up, hopeless as it appeared, but resolved in the first instance to complete in outline the sketch of the first movement, so that I could play it over to Mr. Grove on the piano, and thus enable him to form an opinion of the general effect it would produce. In carrying out this idea I tried to imbue myself with the thematic feeling of the subjects. Then came the difficult problem of what Schubert had in his mind when he wrote them. For in almost every case these subjects, as well as the episodal matter, were left by him without any indication of the manner in which they were to be treated. Merely to harmonize them would have been most in-

artistic in such a work as a symphony. It was therefore absolutely necessary that I should put in appropriate figures against the thematic matter, and often add elaborate part-writing, so that when finished it should sound effective as a whole.

Whilst at work upon it, I felt the weight of the responsibility I had taken upon myself, for had not Mendelssohn, and it was said Arthur Sullivan too, looked at the sketch with the idea of completing it? Sometimes I wished that those great musicians had endeavoured to solve the mystery of the harmonies that had been in Schubert's brain when he sketched the themes, and thus have relieved me from so great an undertaking. Not a few points in the sketch were enough to have puzzled the ingenuity of a conclave of musicians. Here is one, for instance, taken from the first movement, and in this case there is some indication of harmony, but notwithstanding the effect as left in the sketch is quite discordant:—

After trying several methods of fathoming the mystery, I found that adding a sustained B♭ for the basses at once made the whole passage per-

fectly intelligible. I therefore adopted this note as a solution of the problem, the more readily as, throughout the sketch, with a few exceptions, it is the ground notes of the harmonies that are omitted, even when other notes besides the melody are given. It therefore stands in the score I completed as follows, the small notes being mine:—

When I had finished my work in regard to the first movement, I sent the Schubert sketch to Mr. W. S. Rockstro to enable him to insert a description of it in Grove's "Dictionary." A week or two after I received an invitation from Mr. Grove to dine with him and to meet Mr. Rockstro, who would bring the MS. with him.

On the appointed evening I made my way from West Wickham, where I was staying, and arrived at Grove's house somewhat earlier than the hour for dinner and found that he was away from home. After waiting some time, I heard voices outside, and on looking into the garden I saw Grove and

Rockstro approaching, both in full tide of cheerful conversation. When they had come in, I noticed that neither of them was carrying anything that looked like a score, so I ventured to ask if either of them had the Schubert sketch. Their faces, which had previously been lit with happy smiles, fell in an instant, and without saying a word they rushed back to the garden and disappeared. I guessed but too well what had happened. They had left the precious MS. in the train. The only copy that existed in the world had gone astray!

After a considerable time they returned. But although telegrams had been sent up and down the line, no clue as to the whereabouts of the sketch had been obtained. However, as the station-master had given orders to his son to make minute inquiries, we felt that everything possible had been done.

The loss of the MS. threw a gloom over the dinner, as the chances of recovering it seemed extremely remote, there having been no address or name on the wrapper in which it was enclosed. Nevertheless, I played over my version of the first movement, with which Grove was exceedingly pleased.

I was really sorry for poor Rockstro, who looked very guilty the whole evening, as he felt directly responsible for the loss of the MS.

There being no way of getting back to West

Wickham that evening, I stayed the night at Grove's house. The next morning, going down to breakfast, I was full of hope that Grove would have heard something of the missing sketch, but when a message came from the station-master saying that it had not been found, both Grove and myself gave it up as being irretrievably lost. It was therefore with a heavy heart that I bade adieu to Grove.

An hour or two after I had arrived at my friend's in West Wickham, to my great joy I received a telegram saying that the MS. had been discovered in a railway-carriage, and that it was then lying at Norwood Junction.

I was much relieved on hearing this good news, for I had taken great interest in the work I had commenced, and even then I had bestowed a large amount of thought and time on working out the sketch of the first movement. If the MS. had not been discovered, all that I had done would have been in vain.

After this contretemps I never parted with the Schubert MS. until I had quite completed the filling out and instrumenting of the sketch.

The details I have just given of the sketch symphony, and the incidents connected with it, formed the subject of a paper[1] which I read at

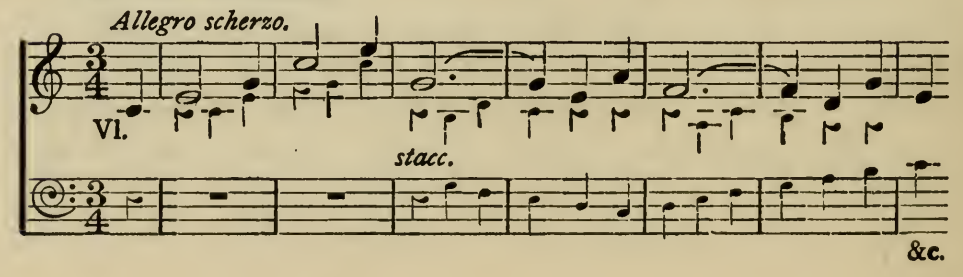
[1] An extract from this paper, containing an account of the incidents narrated in this chapter, is given in the interesting "Life of Sir George Grove," by Charles L. Graves. (Macmillan.)

one of the proceedings of the Musical Association on 9 June, 1891. In reading this paper I gave several illustrations of the difficulties I had to contend with in completing Schubert's sketch in order to make it available for orchestral performance.

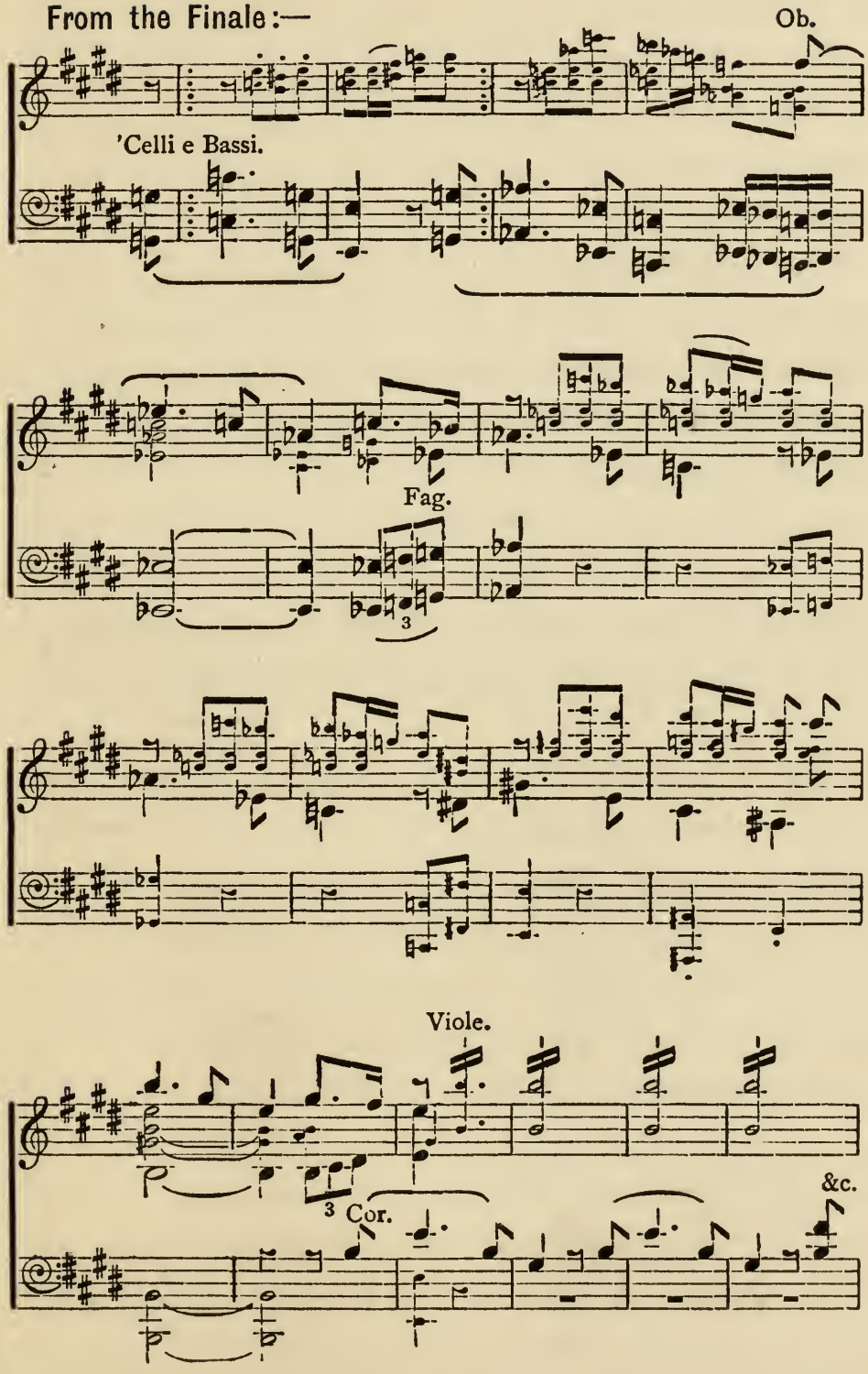
The following extracts, in condensed form, will give some idea of the task I had to accomplish. In these examples the large notes are by Schubert, as indicated in his sketch. The small notes are those I have added.

From the Andante:—

From the Scherzo:—



From the Finale:—



When Mr. (now Sir August) Manns saw the score as completed by me, he was greatly interested in it, and at once arranged to include it in the scheme of the Crystal Palace Concerts for the following season. It was performed for the first time at these concerts on 5 May, 1883, on which occasion the original MS. of the sketch was exhibited in the transept of the Palace, and it excited much interest. The symphony achieved a great success, both in regard to its reception by the public and to the opinions expressed in reference to it in the press. The favourable manner in which it was received led to its being repeated the following season at the Crystal Palace Concerts.

By a curious coincidence, the first performance of the sketch symphony took place just two days before the opening of the Royal College of Music, to which I have already referred. So the intimacy that I had formed with Sir George Grove, whilst at work over the symphony, was still further strengthened by my association with him as one of the professors at the great musical institution of which he was Director. Not only did I meet him at the College at least twice a week, but during the summer I spent many a Sunday afternoon and evening with him in his rustic house at Lower Norwood. When I arrived I generally

found him seated in the garden enjoying a cigar. He always welcomed me with the geniality which was his great charm. "Well, John, what's the news? Have you been writing anything lately?" Then, on going indoors, we would find Lady Grove, and he would tell her I was about to play a new piece to him.

I recollect he was greatly interested on hearing portions of a Mass that I had commenced. I think I had reached the end of the Credo, when I played what I had finished to him; and he told me that he considered it to be the best thing I had done. His encouragement led me to persevere with the work to the end, and now that it is completed I live in the hope that it may some day be heard at one of the great festivals.

Several times I played to him compositions which were on the point of a first public performance, for I greatly valued any critical remark he made concerning them. Occasionally he would show me some rare song of Schubert, and ask me to try it over; which, of course, I did with keen interest. Then he would let me look over specimens of the treasures he possessed in autograph manuscripts of the great composers—perhaps a Beethoven sketch, or something equally interesting. After passing the time thus agreeably, we would later on go in to supper, and during the meal we

would be enlivened by many an interesting anecdote told in Sir George's best manner.

I always looked forward to those Sunday afternoons at Sir George's house. But there is finality to everything in life; and one day I heard that he was too unwell to see any one. The shadow of a sad event was already darkening a once happy home; and, alas! the gloom that had gathered was destined never to be dispelled.

The death of Sir George severed one more link with the past which was associated with my earlier musical career. Walter Bache, Carl Rosa, and Sir Arthur Sullivan had already passed away, so that few remained with whom I could talk of things gone by.

Concerning the Royal College of Music, Sir George, a few years before his death, resigned his post as Director. Fortunately for that institution, the work that he had so ably carried out has been continued by his successor, Sir Hubert Parry, with equal energy and tact. For Sir Hubert combines with exceptional artistic instincts a thorough knowledge of business details, a combination of qualities rare among musicians. Under his direction the College has greatly increased its sphere of action, added to which a noble hall has been erected as a home for the College concerts. These concerts, owing to the well-chosen programmes

and the excellence of the performances given by the students, do much to disseminate a love for the higher forms of music, while affording an opportunity for the more advanced students to obtain a hearing.

I have often thought how many more advantages are offered for the cultivation of musical talent at the present day than was the case when I was a boy. Then, in the whole of the United Kingdom there were only the two scholarships at the Royal Academy of Music, one for a male, the other for a female student.

Now, at all the great musical institutions in this country numerous scholarships are open to competition, so that the words of Gray—

> Chill penury repressed their noble rage,
> And froze the genial current of the soul,

are seldom likely to be applied to the possessor of musical talent in this age of advancement.

CHAPTER XXXIV

CONCLUDING REMARKS

I HAVE often found it interesting as well as instructive to carry back my memory to an earlier period of my life, and to take note of what were then the predominant musical tastes of the day, and to contrast them with those of the age in which we live. As these ideas are just now uppermost in my mind, I will take the opportunity, before concluding my reminiscences, of saying a few words in reference to the past and present state of music in this country.

Regarding the past, there is no doubt that during my younger days the tone of musical feeling that existed was extremely conservative. There was, in fact, a strong prejudice against anything in the way of composition that was not the work of one of the great classical composers. Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Mendelssohn were the musical gods we then worshipped, whilst a few lesser divinities, such as Weber, Spohr, and Sterndale Bennett, were allowed a certain amount of veneration.

In respect to opera, this musical religion was probably less restricted, as it was acknowledged that for this form of musical art special qualifications were requisite, and that composers who might be great in such works as oratorios, symphonies, and string quartets, were not necessarily so in dramatic music.

Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, and Auber were at that time in the zenith of their popularity, whilst Meyerbeer was probably looked upon as the ultimate limit to which sensationalism in dramatic music could possibly attain. Mozart, of course, always pleased, and, strange to say, he has always retained the same unique position in public favour which his charming methods of dramatic music have won for him, and which will doubtless endure as long as music itself, proving that "a thing of beauty is a joy for ever."

Although Schumann was well known on the Continent before my visit to Leipsic, in England we had heard but little about him. I recollect, when I was studying at the Royal Academy of Music, my fellow-student, the late Henry Baumer, saying to me one day, "Have you heard that there is a new composer of the name of Schumann, who is thought a great deal of in Germany?" I expect very few of us in those days knew anything about him. This question was put to me probably

about the year 1852, by which time the greater number of Schumann's best works would have been given to the musical world. No doubt some of his compositions had been heard in England, but I believe they were not awarded a very warm reception by the critics of the day, so they were scarcely allowed a fair chance of gaining ground with the musical public. Even after my return from Germany, where I had learnt to appreciate the beauties of this composer, I remember Chorley, the critic of the "Athenæum," saying to me, "Schumann's music is not to my taste; it is too obscure and unmeaning. What is good in music and art generally, should be clear and intelligible."

As for Wagner and Berlioz, it was considered then a species of high treason to speak of them as composers. They were looked upon as musical maniacs. When W. Mapleson first proposed introducing "Lohengrin" at the opera of Her Majesty's Theatre, the idea was, I understood, scouted as being ridiculous. Probably, had he persisted in presenting the work to the public, it would have been received with a storm of abuse. After all, it was better that Wagner—of whom it might truly be said, "Everything comes to him who waits"—should bide his time so far as England was concerned.

Schumann, Brahms, Wagner, and Berlioz succeeded in the end in breaking down the barrier of musical conservatism in England. How this was accomplished it would be difficult to define. I believe that for a long time the ear of this country was not educated up to the tone methods of these composers. Probably, had their works been introduced earlier, to many, perhaps to the majority of listeners, they would have been unintelligible.

When Berlioz brought forward his compositions at the New Philharmonic Concerts in 1852, they only created wonderment, and if the audience applauded they did so because they admired the man as a conductor rather than as a composer.

The change of attitude on the part of the public and the press towards the composers I have mentioned, and others of the advanced school, has caused quite a revolution in regard to the canons of the art of composition. Formerly a work was judged by the standard of form and subject-matter, clearness of design, and beauty of melody. Now what is principally looked for are eccentricities or novelties in harmony, great complication in the part-writing, and unexpected effects. In point of fact, we in this generation have kicked over the traces, and to a great extent demolished the theories which the old composers, from the time

of Bach to Beethoven, had laboriously built up. In doing so, I am of opinion that great musical discoveries have been made, not only in writing for the orchestra, but in harmony itself.

When I was a youth, no one would have thought it possible to weave such ingenious and novel effects of harmony as are to be found in Grieg and other modern composers of the advanced school. Whether these discoveries will lead to others likely to enrich our art is hard to prophesy, but I cannot help thinking that there is a limit to the combinations possible in harmony, beyond which they degenerate into a chaos of unmeaning sounds. I also think that there is great danger of raising a false standard of excellence by attaching too great value to such peculiarities of harmony, so that the ear of the musician may become almost vitiated by the false stimulus which such chords tend to give. There is a risk arising from these causes, a risk great enough to lead us to fear that music itself in time may cease to be the type of beauty it has been hitherto, and which has earned for it the title of the "divine art."

I ought not here to omit referring to a most important feature in modern music—that is the incorporating of national melodies and harmonies in such forms of compositions as rhapsodies and dances. The predilection which composers in

recent times have had for writing in the style of the countries which gave them birth has led to the production of many interesting works. The most noticeable of these are written either in the Hungarian, Norwegian, or Polish methods, whilst our own composers have proved how effective a use can be made of the Scotch, Irish, or Welsh characteristics in music. Then the quaint and original features of the scales and harmonies of these different nationalities have had an undoubted influence upon modern music, giving it, in certain cases, a special tone-colour.

But perhaps one of the most striking divergences from old to new, in matters concerning composition, is noticeable in the increased orchestra so frequently employed by composers of the newer school. When Berlioz essayed effects produced by combinations of instruments, involving the employment of extra timpani, extra trumpets, and other extras innumerable, few thought that his example would ever be followed by others; yet the augmenting of the old orchestra as we find it in the scores of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Schumann, is now of quite common occurrence. I remember when I told a friend of mine that my "Building of the Ship" was about to be performed for the first time in London, after its production at Leeds, he said, in his simplicity as regards music and its workings,

"Did you write for all the instruments yourself?" Of course I replied in the affirmative. "What, trombones as well?" he asked. "Bravo!" he exclaimed, when he heard I had accomplished this feat. But what are trombones nowadays in the *fortissimo* of a modern score? They are but a small element of what might be termed the war paint of the newer orchestra.

It is said of Napoleon I that he often complained to Cherubini[1] of the way in which the latter hid the voices of the singers in his operas by too much noise (as the great general described it) in the orchestra. Cherubini, to conciliate the Emperor, therefore, on more than one occasion, had all the *fortes* executed *pianissimo*. What would the hero of Marengo have exclaimed, had it been possible for him to have heard a modern orchestra at full power? I fear the consequences to the conductor or composer, perhaps to both, would have been little short of banishment from his dominions.

Whether it is the facilities which the increased orchestra gives for musical colouring, it is certain that composers of the present epoch are constantly searching for new effects; and as subjects of a tragic character offer, perhaps, the greatest number

[1] See "Memorials of Cherubini," Edward Bellasis (New Edition), p. 82.

of opportunities of this nature for tone-colouring, we find they are frequently selected for orchestral treatment.

Indeed, for some time past there has been amongst composers and musical amateurs a great predilection for that which is weird or lugubrious in orchestral music. We love, so to say, to grope about in musical gloom, and when, now and then, we come across some genuine musical phrase we feel, in so doing, that we have made quite a discovery.

Perhaps, from the same reason that our imagination is excited to awe or wonderment by some wild and mountainous region seen in the gloaming, much of the interest we take in music of the newer school may be due to our being mystified by the undefined.

I recollect, one afternoon, at a Crystal Palace concert, hearing a composition of a very tragic character, illustrating some subject almost blood-curdling in its sentiment. I was sitting next to Sir George Grove at the time, and at the conclusion of it he turned to me and said: "I do not know, John, why it is that we have become so serious; music is not so lively and gay as it used to be years ago." Probably this impression which Sir George had in his mind was to a great extent due to the polyphonic character of so much in

modern music of the classical school, and to a lack of rhythmical subjects which embody that kind of melody that we can carry away with us after a first hearing.

No doubt, many very fine specimens of the rhapsodical in music have been the result of this tendency among modern composers. Let us not, however, regard this phase of musical art as the only one worth cherishing or encouraging; for if we do, a great sameness in music will be the result.

We look for variety in art. However fascinating a certain form of composition may be, it is no reason why other modes of expression should be considered faulty. The polyphonic in music is now the order of the day; but it is a question as to whether too much of it does not become wearisome. We are apt, in these days, to place undue value upon that which is complex in music. Should we not rather seek for what is beautiful and simple, yet classical withal? This is why, I think, that a great orchestral conductor is credited to have said: "There is a future for Mozart." For Mozart is the type of all that is clear and defined in music; and if there is a future for Mozart, why not also for that in art which is constructed upon the same clear and simple lines, and produces some of the same effect? It would not, however, be consistent for me to conclude my

reminiscences with speculations as to the future of music; I will therefore dwell no longer upon this theme. After all, composers of the past have provided us with so many and varied specimens in every form of music, that we should not, in the greed for novelty, inadvertently overlook any of the treasures of art that have been left us as heir-looms for all time. Are there any such art treasures that still await discovery, or has the musical anti-quarian accomplished all that is humanly possible? In any case, let us continue to revere the great masterpieces we possess; and whilst we should be ever ready to welcome with alacrity all that is good in the newer school of music, we should not, in our desire to avoid old-world prejudice, go to the extreme of considering as obsolete, those forms and canons of the art upon which the classical composers of the past placed so much value, and which have been handed down to us as models of symmetry and beauty.

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